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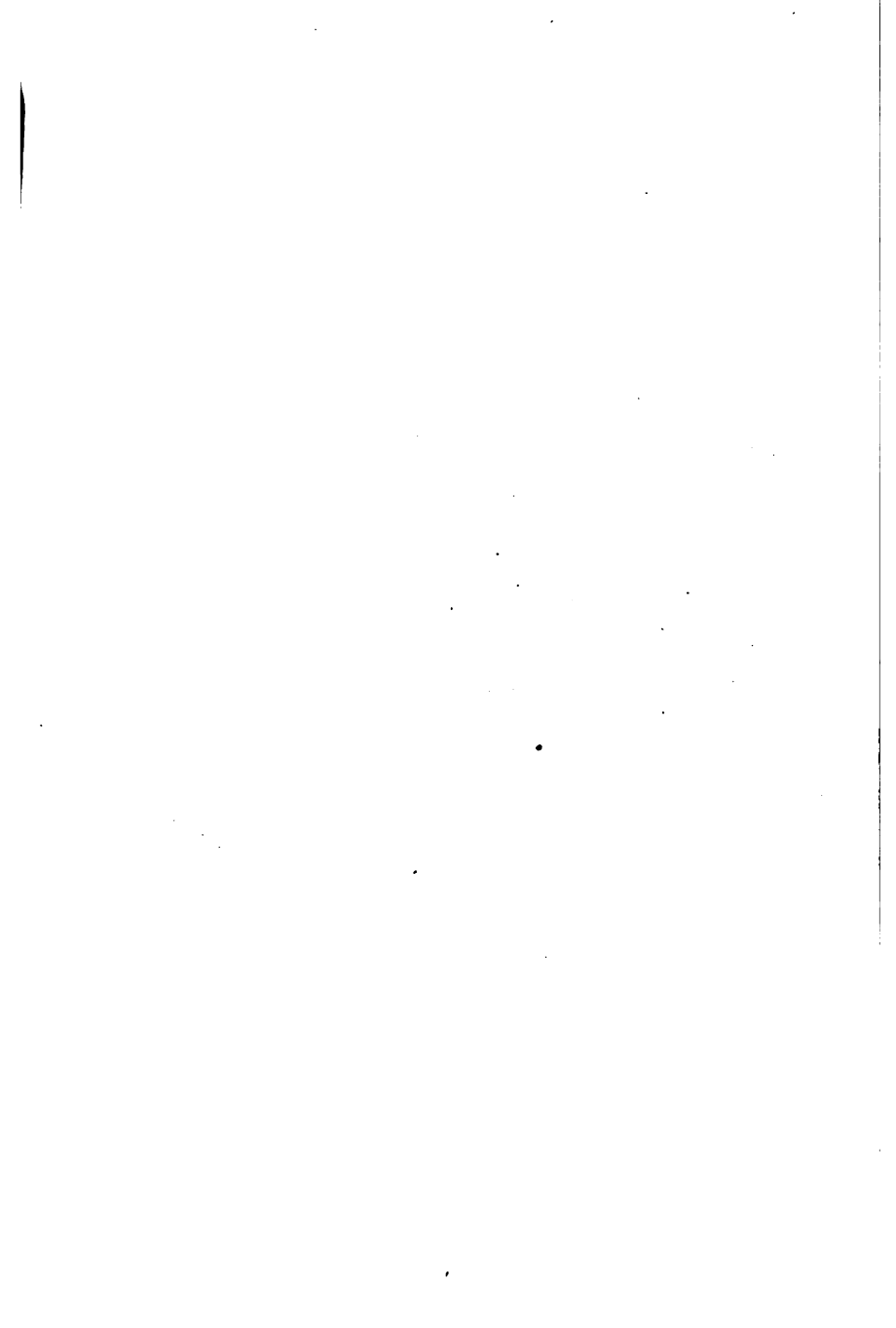
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NOTES

ON THE

EARLY TRAINING OF CHILDREN

BY

MRS. FRANK MALLESON

Third Edition

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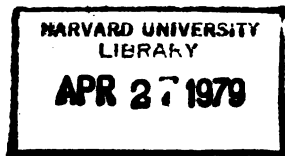
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These Notes are Dedicated

TO THE

HAPPINESS OF CHILDREN.

"To all of us, the expressly appointed schoolmasters and schoolings we get are as nothing compared with the unappointed, incidental, and continual ones, whose school hours are all the days and nights of our existence, and whose lessons, noticed and unnoticed, stream in upon us with every breath we draw."—CARLYLE'S "LIFE OF STERLING."

"Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself?"

ROMANS, chap. ii. v. 21.

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NOTES

ON THE

EARLY TRAINING OF CHILDREN.



CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

"The problem is, 'to train up a child in the way' he should grow. Grow he will in any case; what we want is, so to control the circumstances that call forth his activity that he shall grow as straight as possible, as much as possible, in as many directions as possible, but as harmoniously as possible."

James Ward.

THERE are few gifts to man more precious, and at the same time more common, than the gift of children; and yet the art of education, of training the young into useful and virtuous men and women, is widely misunderstood or neglected. In how few families do we see the result of thoughtful and careful practical education! in how many do we find that want of good training which results in so-called "spoiled children"! The very

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phrase implies an unfulfilled capacity of excellence. For all the virtues of childhood, these children exhibit the contraries ; in the place of intelligent activity, indifference and idleness ; of obedience and self-control, angry self-assertion and wilfulness ; of loving confidence, irreverent curiosity ; of serenity, fretful impatience. These manifestations are not the growth of a day. They are the result of *management* uninspired by a guiding principle, of management in which *training* has no place.

Yet few fathers and mothers experience the first joy of parentage without feeling also something of the solemn responsibility it includes. What mother folding her arms around her newborn infant can wish less than that it should become "as much as possible an instrument of happiness to himself, and next, to other beings" ? What father appreciating the mute contrast of his baby's tender helplessness and his own mature strength, can do less than resolve that the silent appeal for protection and guidance shall be faithfully met ? But such germs of parental duty do not include a definite ideal of education, nor do they point out how educational ends are to be attained by educational means. "It is a truth yet remaining to be recognized," says Mr. Herbert Spencer in his "Education," "that the last stage of

mental development of each man and woman is to be reached only through a proper discharge of the parental duties." And as the present race of parents has not found the Art of Education in their curriculum of studies, as Mr. Spencer hopes future generations will do, they are left to deal with the problem of infant life, freshly given for their individual study and solution, without preparation, and often indeed without the idea that preparation is necessary.

For the average parents the great educational thinkers seem to have existed in vain : the wisdom of Plato, with its perennial freshness and beauty, the noble ideal of Milton, the excellent sense of Locke, the originality of Rousseau, the loving insight of Pestalozzi, the abundant thought and suggestiveness of modern writers on education, are guiding lights which exist not for them. They are at no trouble to settle which definition of education is most satisfactory to them, they are not oppressed by the importance of the subject with which they have to deal. The child belongs to them ; its relations to society and humanity do not come within the scope of their thought. They gather up, in some sort of fashion, the current ideas of their time with regard to the bringing up of children, and they act upon these. If they are well-to-do, a conventional care and treatment

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is demanded of them : "experienced nurses" are the first necessity ; but as a rule they are not engaged like other functionaries, because they are specially qualified to handle the material entrusted to them. Grooms and gardeners are supposed to know something about the nature of the horses, or the conditions of plant life, with which they have to deal : valuable property might be injured by their ignorance or want of skill. Children alas ! demand, as most parents think, no special understanding or management. It is not recognized that their sensitive and tender natures require to be dealt with by persons qualified by temperament and instruction ; so that nurses as a class, though they may have some small knowledge of the physical bringing up of children, are wholly unfit to deal with the complex life given into their charge. They are even too blind and ignorant to be aware of the difficulties of their task. They govern by rule of thumb, kindly if they are kindly women, harshly and oppressively if they are the reverse ; their nursery management consists mainly in repressing activity, levelling individuality, obtaining obedience at any cost when possible, and fostering vanity and emulation. Ordinary nursery life is a tissue of dreariness, ennui, and repression.

The life of the schoolroom, which succeeds

that of the nursery, is after the same pattern. A governess is engaged to teach probably two languages besides her own, music, arithmetic, history, and every other subject needed for the curriculum of schools. In her there will probably be more ability to treat the children, but she will doubtless share the educational perplexity of the parents, and it will soon be found that the boys of the family are "beyond the management of women," and must be sent to school ; while the girls are left to submit to or to rebel against, the rule of the schoolroom, as the case may be, and to pick up what knowledge is possible under such imperfect provision of instruction. And the same want of guiding principles of action is shown in the choice of schools. How few parents carefully inquire into the government and methods pursued at any school they select ; how few consider in what way the ends of parental care will be furthered by school-life ; how few choose this or that particular school for reasons of a *real* educational value !

In families where there is less material wealth and an equal ignorance of practical education, some of these evils are intensified : the nurses are of a commoner type, the governess less capable, the schools of a presumably lower class. On the other hand, where the scale of wealth is still

lower, the children get the advantages, such as they are, of State education joined to a closer family life, and also the training in usefulness, intelligence, and self-dependence often to be found where every member of the household is expected to contribute to the common good.

But in all classes we find a fatal want of educational ideals, with an equally fatal powerlessness of adapting educational means to ends. A definite aim, however, a clear knowledge of what is desirable to attain in the training of children is essential ; for their education must be accomplished in the life of minutes and hours, in infinite small degrees ; and the great division of the work makes it difficult to keep the goal of the labour always in view, and to see how each part will tell on the whole. The author of " Natural Religion " forcibly states this first need in rational and successful education :—

" Look, then, how the English people treat their children. Try to discover, from the way they train them, from the education they give them, what they wish them to be. They have ceased, almost consciously ceased, to have any ideal at all. Traces may still be observed of an old ideal not quite forgotten : here and there a vague notion of instilling hardihood, a really decided wish to teach frankness and honesty, and

in a large class, also good manners; but these are, after all, only negative virtues. What do they wish their children to aim at? What pursuits do they desire for them? Except that, when they grow up, they are to make or have a livelihood, and take a satisfactory position in society, and, in the meanwhile, that it would be hard for them not to enjoy themselves heartily, most parents would be puzzled to say what they wish for their children; and, whatever they wish, they wish so languidly, that they entrust the realization of it almost entirely to strangers, being themselves, so they say—and, indeed the Philistine or irreligious person always is—much engaged. The parent, from sheer embarrassment and want of an ideal, has in a manner abdicated, and it has become necessary to set apart a special class for the cultivation of parental feelings and duties. The modern schoolmaster should change his name, for he has become a kind of standing or professional parent."

But no schoolmaster, however wise, can supply the omission of early parental care, which must begin at least with the life of the child in the cradle. It is true I have known enlightened people who rated so highly the special gifts needed in the early training of children that they were sceptical of finding them in ordinary families, and

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advocated children being sent from home (I do not know at what age) to the care of those who possessed these peculiar qualifications for training ; but in modern life, where numbers of homeless little ones have been collected together, it has been found that the best way of training them even into useful human beings, has been to put them into small groups under the guardianship of a factitious mother or father, and thus imitate in some sort the essential features of family life. As far as we can see there is, and should be, no escape from the sacred obligations of parental duty. We must look to parents and to none else for radical improvements in the early training of children : we can appeal to none, if not to them, for a truer justice towards those who are involuntarily dependent on them ; and we must trust that with a finer conception of their duty to offspring they will see a first obligation in preparing themselves for the duties of parents.

In the following "Notes" I address myself with some confidence, though with due humility, to parents. I believe so much in both the nobility and the difficulty of their duties to their children, that I think they will be willing to weigh the results arrived at through the experience of another educator, that they will receive with some interest her views concerning the aims to be

striven for in the daily education of children, and will consider with some attention the methods she suggests for obtaining certain desirable results. Both the ideals I would present to my readers, and the methods I urge should be employed to attain them, will best be seen in dealing with the several divisions of my subject. I will only put in condensed form here what I shall try to elaborate in every one of the following pages.

The main point is to perceive clearly the ideal to be striven for. It can never be satisfactory in education to aim at less than the highest; the child given to us to deal with may have within him (I use the masculine form throughout as inclusive of both sexes) all the capacity of excellence to be found in the best of the race: educate him at least as if he had. Do not begin with limitations, they will force themselves upon us soon enough. That must always be a poor ideal that reaches no farther than a repetition of ourselves, or narrows the ambition of the educator to fitting the child for some small niche in the industrial world. We have to educate, as far as is permitted us, a perfect man or woman, nothing lower or smaller; and in proportion to the faithfulness with which we keep this standard in view will be our measure

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of success. In pursuance of this standard, we must do our best to secure to our child health and full physical development, that the body may be as far as possible a perfect instrument of the mind. We must train the senses to be acute and accurate, the intellect to be keen and clear and strong, disciplined to the power of concentrated attention and the love of work : we must make the moral nature courageous, truthful, loving, and unselfish ; we must foster those spiritual qualities which link ordinary daily life with what is permanent and eternal. Our task is, to train for life, for useful, honourable life, worthy in being and in doing, begun in mortality but to reach, we hope, beyond and above it.

CHAPTER II.

INFANT LIFE.

‘ Man is like a plant, which requires a favourable soil for the full expansion of its natural or innate powers.’

Lcky's "History of European Morals."

SCIENTIFIC and unscientific opinion agree that the influences affecting the child begin before birth. I do not know how far physiologists believe it will ever be possible to control and direct these influences; but it seems probable that, with the advance of knowledge and reflection in this regard, men and women will be more impelled by latent physiological convictions, and consequent instincts, into unions good for the possible offspring of their marriage. We see these instincts now operating against glaring physiological unsuitability, such as hereditary madness; and it is scarcely too much to hope that sooner or later secondary influences which now determine marriages will be repudiated, and unions made which satisfy the whole natures of the men and women who contract them; unions in which “falling in love” shall be evidence that

while the senses and the fancy are pleased, the intellectual and moral aspirations of both are satisfied, and the sanctification of noble passion follows the mutual attraction of each and every part of the two natures.

It may be that the most powerful influences affecting the unborn child will always continue to be the fitness of the parents for union, the strength of their love, and their desire for offspring. In the present state of opinion, when these influences are scarcely recognized, others which are acknowledged are not strongly enforced. Expectant mothers are enjoined to live hygienic lives for the sake of the coming child; but they are not educated to think it right or expedient to alter the tenour of their lives in more important particulars for its sake. Yet I think weighty reasons might be advanced to show that the life of the expectant mother should be filled and governed by a sense of responsibility to the child; and that not only should she avoid whatever is injurious to her physical health, but, regarding herself as the appointed medium of influence to her babe, should actively guard her own mental and spiritual health, "possess her soul in patience," and, serenely receptive, keep herself sensitive to all ennobling influences. It has been divinely ordered that the mother shall wait many months for her

child. This time is obviously meant to be one of preparation in several directions. We think even a poor mother strangely careless if she does not then provide shelter and clothes. But how more than equally necessary is it that she should, in addition to material comforts, prepare herself to receive the coming gift! If the loveliness and holiness of such gifts were not obscured to ordinary vision by their commonness, could parents ever receive them without befitting humility and reverence?

Training, defined to be "directed growth," begins with the birth of the child. It is immediately sensitive to impressions of outward things; these cause it pain or pleasure, and it manifests its resistance to the one and its desire for the other. It feels hunger, and the shock of cold air, and it cries; it is soothed by food and warmth, it is quiet and sleeps. It very soon shows a sense of its own helplessness and need of human protection and sympathy; and this need should not be disregarded. I know that some good nurses point with triumph to infants "who give no trouble," who will allow themselves to be laid in their cradles, and fall asleep, who are "spoiled" by no rocking or over-much dandling. But I maintain that the traditional lullaby is the natural satisfaction of a natural craving, and cannot be abandoned without proportionate harm. Love is

essential to an infant's well-being ;—" a babe is fed with milk and praise," tender Charles Lamb reminds us,—and the mother naturally manifests hers in brooding over it, in giving up time to it, in rocking, and moving, and soothing her child in many manifold ways ; and if " beauty born of murmuring sound shall pass into " its " face," how much more subtly shall love pass into the spiritual seedling, and nurture it into ampler life ?

Again, we are often told that crying is good for the child ; but we have to remember that crying is its protest against pain, in a greater or less degree, and thjs warning cannot be neglected with impunity. We may take it as an axiom, that the healthier and the better managed the babe is, the less it will cry. I do not pretend to give here directions for the physical care of infants ; these can be found in many good treatises devoted exclusively to the subject ; I wish only to touch upon one or two points where the physical management of the infant involves its moral training, and I regard the avoidance of crying as a very important step in the latter. The baby should have its wants anticipated, to prevent its crying to express them, and attention should be given to it quietly, promptly, lovingly ; it should never be needlessly thwarted in its desires, never made passionate by inattention or resistance ; it should be kept

serene and happy, and this care should extend to every moment of an infant's day. With a recurrence of actions at stated times, habits are formed, and the child will soon fall into sleeping and taking its food at regular intervals. These should be carefully, though not too rigorously, observed. I have known conscientious mothers prefer to let infants cry with hunger, rather than feed them before the allotted time; but it is reasonable to believe that the physical wants of even new-born infants may be subject to some variation, and the sympathy of the mother will lead her to study and gradually interpret the baby's desires. This subtle guide—sympathy—is first awakened by very simple needs. The mother's first lessons are comparatively easy; accepting them, she will find they increase in complexity with the growing life of the child; and thenceforth, while education goes on, a watchful study of the nature before her will be required of her, until, helped by her own wonderful affinity to it, she learns to put herself in imagination into the place of the child, and to understand what it feels and needs.

It is difficult to say how soon a baby may cry out of wilfulness, for ends beyond the imperative satisfaction of its wants; the needs of hunger, cold, sleep, change of position, the necessity of movement.

I am inclined to believe that Rousseau, with

subtle perception, has touched upon a truth, when he says that the baby, while experimenting on its surroundings, tries to discover, amongst other experiments, how far the power of its own personality can reach, how much it can obtain "de l'empire, et de la domination." Very soon, I am sure, the mother has to make it feel that she herself follows a higher law than her own will; that she seeks the baby's welfare, body and soul, and, having found the path to it, she cannot yield to influences which would lead her to disobey this direction. I believe this to be a fundamental principle of influence. The child soon recognizes that its mother is swayed by no variable mood, by no self-will, anger, or impatience, but by a steadfast love and devotion to duty; and this becomes in time to *it* a guiding force.

Thus the training begun even in the first month of its existence, continues as its life unfolds into a larger consciousness of the external world around it; its senses become alive to more numerous and to different impressions; it suns itself in the love shown it, and soon answers the smile upon its mother's face; its education is fairly begun.

And now, following the example of the gardener who places the plants committed to his care in the situation and soil which suits them, we have to arrange that our human nursling shall

have the best conditions for growth that we have power to command or to mould. And the first of those conditions must be the continued personal care of the mother for the child. It seems strange that there should be any need for dwelling upon such an apparently obvious duty; and yet, as Rousseau insisted upon the obligation of French mothers to nurse and tend their infants at the latter part of the last century, so at the end of this, it is necessary to protest against those customs, those claims of "society," which make many mothers give over entirely to others the personal care of their children. I know many young mothers will say, "I know nothing about babies; I should be afraid of the responsibility you say I ought to take;" or, "If I turn nurse, I should destroy my husband's life, and my own too." I maintain, nevertheless, that the first duty laid upon mothers is to make themselves fit for their responsibility. Young mothers naturally must always lack experience; but thought and thoughtful observation, guided by a conscientious devotion, will go far in this, as in all other human obligations, to make up for actual experience, and the life of every day removes the want little by little. Then, as to the second protest, I take it as theoretically acknowledged that both parents have joint responsibility in the edu-

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cation of the child ; and that though the mother is pre-eminently fitted for the chief care of the offspring, the best powers of both minds will be needed for the gradual and complete development of the young creature. In proportion as this is granted, the father will be prepared to make some sacrifice of time and comfort for the sake of his child, and the mother, as guardian of the household comfort and happiness, will do her best to harmonize, when her babe is born, the new and old duties. Her husband's brain is active and hard-worked ; she must take care it is not worried by a baby's crying, or incessant need of attention. The man's evenings are his time for rest and recreation ; however devoted to the baby both may be, she must ensure that his quiet reading or music is left undisturbed. It is one of the hardest yet most necessary duties of a woman's life to carry on with attention, harmony, and serenity the several parallel threads of her household life ; every one demands her constant care, the relation between every one must be kept, and she must be strong enough to fulfil hourly, even momentarily, claims upon her intellect, heart, and patience.

I do not propose, however, that the mother should have no assistance in the care of her child, but I do urge that the assistance she chooses

shall be entirely subordinate to her. She must never give up to any one the personal oversight of all that concerns it. Whatever assistant she selects should be primarily healthy, and equable and gentle in temper, child-loving and capable of devotion, truthful, refined, and intelligent in comprehending and obeying the spirit as well as the letter of directions. I know young women possessing such qualities are difficult to get, but they are to be found; and when such a nurse is met with, the mother should treat her with a consideration and kindness which will render her life contented and happy. She must remember that even the subordinate care of the best child is a strain upon the powers of mind and body alike, and that the more devoted and excellent the care, the greater is the need of change and recreation. Locke wisely says, "Children should, from their first beginning to talk, have some discreet, sober, nay, wise person about them, whose care it should be to fashion them aright and keep them from all ill, especially the infection of bad company. I think this province requires great sobriety, temperance, tenderness, diligence, and discretion, qualities hardly to be had for ordinary salaries, nor easily to be found anywhere. As for the charge of it, I think it will be the money best laid out that can be about our children; spare it in

toys, in silk, and ribbons, laces, and other useless expenses, as much as you please."

Having secured the right kind of help, the mother should arrange that the room, or rooms, set apart for the child's special use should be as near, instead of as far removed from her own as possible; indeed, that with due regard to other claims, it shall live, as we have said, with her, and that her eyes, ears, and intelligence should take cognizance of all details of its food, exercise, and rest, so that the routine she sets about it may be subject to the immediate modification or re-adjustment of her informed judgment. The wind is cold, or in the east, and the infant must be taken out of doors where it will have shelter; the heat is great, and customary clothing must be exchanged for cooler; its appetite flags, or its sleep is less quiet than usual, and the mother should be instantly roused to the importance of increased watchfulness. No detail in baby life is too trivial for such daily observation.

It is needless to say that the nursery of a child must be in harmony with the means and style of living of its parents; but assuming this, the child's room should be arranged after an ideal of simple beauty. The room should be carefully selected for its cheerfulness and sunniness; a south aspect is above all others desirable. The

walls should be covered with soft, delicate colour, or a paper of good design above a serviceable dado of wood. Walter Crane's paper of the Sleeping Princess is, I think, quite a model for a nursery paper. The sleeping beauty discerned by careful looking, in her screen of leaves, with her attendants, and pet dog in deep repose, awaiting the fresh stir of life typified in the prince who is parting the concealing branches of her bower, sometimes hidden, sometimes revealed, must offer to a child endless occupation and delight. In some of the illustrations of children's books, designed by Walter Crane and others, there are charming suggestions of what an ideal child's room should be. A seat in the window, a low cupboard to which children can have access for their own possessions, may be surrounded with associations of delight which last a lifetime. When carpets of excellent colour and design are easily procurable, there can be little excuse for putting in the child's room a gaudy old-fashioned covering. The present fashion of putting a carpet in the middle of the room with some border round it, should remain permanent for a nursery, as it renders extreme cleanliness and nicety easy. But if the border be of stained or polished wood, it should not be wide, as children are apt to slip on such margins, and may strain themselves.

Indian matting might be used if the wood were discarded. Before the carefully guarded fire a soft rug should be placed, an emblem of comfort for the little one. Another rug of soft material that can be easily cleaned should be at hand for the child to crawl on, and lie on with a cushion. Besides the toys and occupations of the child, the other furniture should be chosen with regard alone to the needs and happiness of the child; as much space as possible should be kept, and nothing put into the room which the child may not handle or touch. Ugly forms in furniture, sharp corners and edges, against which the toddling infant may fall, should be absolutely avoided. The coal-box should be kept out of the room, while tables made to the height of tiny sitters (such as are used in Kindergartens), and chairs to match *with* backs, and presently modern school desks, adapted to the age of the child, should be found in all good nurseries. Pictures, or good photographs or engravings, should hang on the walls: some of birds and animals, which the child can soon understand, and some, I venture to suggest, above its quick comprehension, a fine face, some early Italian Madonna, a copy of Holman Hunt's "Christ in the Temple," or a bit of some Greek frieze, about which the child's thought will gradually twine.

In arranging in every direction for the right training of the child, it is important that all the servants of the household should be persons capable, at least, of respecting the educational ideas of the parents, and incapable therefore of falsehood or passion towards it, or of rousing its fear. The child should see nothing but goodness and kindness around it. Ruskin has said lately : "All education to beauty is, first, in the beauty of gentle human faces round a child ; secondly, in the fields, fields meaning grass, water, beasts, flowers, sky ; without these no man can be educated humanly. If the child has other things right round it, and given to it—its garden, its cat, and its window to the skies and stars—in time pictures of flowers, and beasts, and things, in Heaven and heavenly earth, may be useful to it. But see first that its realities are heavenly."

And in pursuance of this fine teaching, let us be careful by all manner of means not to trammel the child with our merely conventional modes of thought. It is perhaps too much to expect that we can preserve the balance of its judgment wholly free until the intellect acquires force to judge justly, but it should be our endeavour not to impose on it our prejudices, our conventional customs, our class distinctions ; we shall do it a serious injury if we destroy its freedom from bias, its lowliness of heart.

CHAPTER III.

NURSERY MANAGEMENT.

"The most important part of education is right training in the nursery."

Plato's Laws, Book I. (Jowett).

ONE of the first conditions of good nursery management is to make the child's routine of duty pleasant to him. Abundant opportunities will occur later on, to test and strengthen his virtue; at first establish a habit of goodness. Take care that the child wakes to a cheerful day; do not rouse him brusquely, let him finish out his sleep, speak to him on waking cheerily, associate your coming with pleasant words and tones, remember how soon may be struck the key-note to a Rosamund's "Day of Misfortunes." Have the bath and dressing things ready in orderly fashion; unreadiness in these small things is certainly bad for him morally as well as physically. Let all your movements and your handling be gentle and caressing. A child has a right to use even passionate remonstrance if soap is smeared into his eyes, or his skin is left half wet, or is rasped with

a hard towel, and if his hair is combed roughly ; such treatment would try the patience of an adult, and is quite enough to fill a child's morning with a vague sense of trouble.

With our endeavour to make the small duties of the day pleasant to the child, we must simultaneously create a sense of their *inevitableness*. There should be no question as to the necessity of those things we consider good for him. We must have a clear idea what this is, and this should be carried out without debate, unless exceptional circumstances, such as illness, come to disturb the daily routine. In some households every action of the child is allowed to raise discussion : " Oh, must I go out ?" " Must I wash my hands ?" " I don't like my hair brushed." " I don't want to go to bed." A gentle, loving firmness in such matters will soon make the youngest child accept the routine we mark out for it as a matter of course, and there will be no crying or discontented remonstrance about each act. If there is, we may be sure, in the case of a well-trained child, there is something wrong with its physical health, which should be investigated and set right before the routine of its life in ordinary health is resumed ; for there is nothing to which human nature either in young or old more cheerfully submits than the inevitable.

I cannot insist too strongly upon the necessity of *refinement* in all dealings with the child. Even refined mothers and good nurses are too prone to disregard the personal reserve which is usually strong in the children of educated parents. This feeling, on the contrary, should be carefully cherished, and trained to control the expression and gestures of the little child. I am far, however, from wishing to make it prudish ; we need not lead it to think the beauty of its little body something disgraceful, because it is the custom in civilized communities to wear clothes ; but it is right for the adults surrounding it, and for the little one itself, that it should be trained in all ways of personal decorum and perfect modesty. The same refined watchfulness should be exercised over the child's eating. When it begins to take food, it should be taught to wait patiently for its bread and milk to get cool ; it should expect it by slow mouthfuls, and pause between them. All eagerness and greediness should be checked by the mother, who sees that the little one has the food proper for it, nicely prepared, while gentle words present pleasant images to its mind. The best lesson in manners is to banish all nursery meals as soon as possible. As soon as the child can sit up to the table of its parents in its high chair, it should take its food with them, become accus-

tomed to see delicacies it is not to have, or even ask for, and behave with the refined quietness and reserve of those about it. It is true, the mother will be more taxed by the presence of her child at meals, for she cannot relax her watchfulness while it is very young. I have seen mothers, at table with their children, attending to everything but them, and the little ones behaving in consequence more like a set of young puppies than children of decent parents. The mother has to contrive to carry on many threads of life together, but the consequent strain will be repaid in this direction by the good manners of her children.

There are few things more degrading to the moral nature than *fear*, "the expectation of pain." Healthy being is impossible under its influence, and one of our earliest cares must be to prevent its even entering the atmosphere of a child's life. Timidity and courage are alike easily developed, and it is the business of parents to foster the latter while avoiding in every way to call the former into growth. It is perhaps not too much to say, that upon the impressions and influences of the first seven years of our life depends our possession of the virtue of courage, or our servitude to the demon of fear.

Man, both in his early and later years, has a dread of the unknown; to an infant everything

is unknown, and it behoves its parents to watch that no new experience should come to it with fear. A sudden sense of helplessness in solitude may be dangerously terrifying to a baby. The dark is terrible, unless always associated with a sense of security and the mother's encircling arms. Children should never be put to sleep in a room without some shaded light, and the nurse within hearing of the slightest noise. If not thus quickly reassured on waking by light and attendance, they may suffer agonies of fear long before they can explain what they are feeling. No children, however young, should ever hear disagreeable or frightening things said in their presence. Ghost and goblin stories, murders or terrible descriptions of every kind, such as those in "Blue Beard" and the "Forty Thieves," ugly, uncanny, mysterious, or painful pictures, everything capable of exciting fear, must be avoided by the entire household. An imaginative child will contrive to build an image of dread on the smallest mysterious suggestion, which may haunt him for years. I have known a very young child lie awake night after night in agony after hearing two nurse-maids speak of a murder; the same child had a terror she never forgot from a ghost story told her by an indiscreet governess. Cases of other children are known to me, who, after having been kept

from all fear in their own home, heard ghost stories told, for the first time, while visiting, and grew to dread, all through the day, the approach of bed-time, and the dark lonely bedroom in which they lay awake. Many people who look back to similar experiences in their childhood, hold that some such "hardening" process is inevitable and salutary. The battle between unreasoning instinctive fear and reasonable courage must indeed come in every young life; but we should strive that it should come when the faculty of reason and the virtue of courage are cultivated into strength, not when, as in early childhood, the instincts are uncontrolled by any higher faculty, and unchecked by any experience of fact.

Equally vicious but more visible in result, is the influence of fear inspired by threatened punishments, cross words, and angry gestures. We all unhappily know the leaden look, the timid eyes, of children subject to these evils. I have known a sensitive child dread scolding and impatient tones, even when not addressed to herself, with a shrinking which almost made her a coward for life. But the question of the punishment of children has not its place here; for the moment we have not to deal with faults already engendered, and in need of correction, but with the training of the first blameless years of infancy; and in this

training the perpetual sunshine of the moral atmosphere, the light and warmth of tenderness and love, is of all things first needful.

I have said that a child should be kept in ignorance of fear until it is old enough to learn to be brave; but the experience and the lesson in courage may come unawares with some of the first impressions of the external world. I saw the other day a baby of ten months old touch with her tiny finger some fur on a dress. It was a new sensation to her, and she shrank from it with a comical horror, rubbing her little hand on her dress as though to get rid of some visible impurity. But the habit of examining new things was strong in her, and she presently touched the fur again and again, at first with a recurrence of her horror, then with diminishing dislike. The unknown became familiar to her, and gradually she came to touch the passive "pussy" with almost liking. The same child learnt to stroke a gentle spaniel with complacency and love.

Patient *endurance* should be trained in the youngest children by encouraging them to bear pain well and bravely. If the infant tumbles down, or knocks itself against a sharp edge, sympathize with it, distract its attention, but do not make a fuss over it, do not let the child exaggerate its pain. A few encouraging words, a

kiss, will make it proud to bear its trial bravely ; and with the approval of its parents it will grow even Spartan in its power of endurance. I have known little children beg for the fearful pleasure of being put on the narrow wainscot ledge of the room, to learn to balance themselves, their father standing near to catch them in his arms when the balance could no longer be kept. It is important in this, as in all training, that children should see the example of courage around them. If their mother bears illness, and their father sharp pain, without a murmur, they will feel a respect for endurance which will lead them to imitate it. I have known children sustained by such courage, who, in times of childish illness, took medicine without a word of protest, and wrung their mother's heart, while they rejoiced it, by the perfect patience and self-containment with which they endured pain and restlessness. Stories of heroism touch the imagination of children, and awaken in them a desire to make experiments in their own courage ; and these experiments form a tradition from which a brave child will be ashamed to turn. A little girl, upon hearing some tales of the voluntary endurance of pain by some Huguenot ancestors, emulated their example by dropping lighted sealing-wax upon her own hand behind a screen which hid all but her face from her sisters. She

succeeded in showing that she could bear pain without the least sign of betrayal, and she carries the scar to this day. Another little girl of six was watching a swarm of bees by the side of her father. A bee flew round and round her, and at last settled on her face. "Be quiet, H.," her father said, "don't stir, and then it won't hurt you." So she remained perfectly still for some seconds until the bee flew away, remarking, "that if she were so quiet the bee would think she was a post." I remember an old gentleman who had come of a race of courageous ancestors, telling me, that the one fear of his boyhood was the mill-stream that ran near his father's house. He longed to plunge into it, as into other streams, but his dread of it withheld him. At last, ashamed of his fear, he determined to conquer it once for all, and one cold morning, when the light was just coming, he got up from his bed, ran hastily to the stream, and plunged in; he no longer acknowledged a fear. It was consistent with this act of bravery, that the after-life of this boy was remarkable for its moral courage.

I now come to the consideration of one of the fundamental conditions of nursery, as well as of all other management—the requiring and giving of *obedience*. One often hears great lamentations over the difficulty of getting obedience from children.

A mother will say, without apparent shame, "Oh! I can't manage him, he is beyond me!" or one hears a child flatly refusing to go to bed, and carried screaming and kicking upstairs. I am strongly tempted to say that obedience will always be given to those worthy of exacting it; or rather, that it is given to reasonable claims enforced in a right way. Parents must take care that they are fit to rule, that their government is good for the child, good for the home; their personal influence should then be strong enough to obtain what they wish with their children. They must not be despots, demanding acquiescence in arbitrary decrees made for their pleasure merely; the child must feel that every wish of his parents is in harmony with their consistent and never-failing endeavour to secure his welfare. I think even an infant feels this, and that its mother, in granting or denying it the gratification it cries for, is acting in obedience to a higher law than caprice. Any infringement of this law is soon understood to be not a matter of question, it is impossible. But a mother may sympathize with the pain her denial causes, and she should soften the refusal by her loving words and gentle manner. Thus the child grows to recognize, day by day, the law by which she and he are governed, and the habit of obedience is begun.

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We still unhappily hear of "breaking" a child's will, but I hope the expression is only used by very narrow or very ignorant persons. For it is to the will, the outcome, the energy of the whole nature, that we must look for all that is strong and valuable in the future life of the young creature; it is criminal to speak lightly of "breaking" such a force. What we have to do with it in early training is to direct it to desire what it ought to desire, to strengthen, and to develop it. Let us consider the way of doing this in very young children. Take a time when the mother and the child wish different things, say the hour for going out, and he is intent in watching the kitten, or is interested with a new toy; he objects to be dressed for his walk. Do not hastily snatch away the plaything, or disturb his rapt attention; turn his thoughts to something different, something which interests him in another direction, speak gently in an animated, loving way, remind him of the pleasures he will find in his walk; and the proof of your management being wise will be in the child's will acting with yours. Again, if a child in the drawing-room discovers an attractive employment in pulling threads off a fringe, or tries to draw towards him some bright china on a shelf or low table, do not hastily take him up, and put him down at the other end of the room, call-

ing him naughty and "tiresome." Do not put physical obstacles of any kind in the way of his returning to his destructive amusement; but gently shake your head, and say, "No, no!" And immediately give him his own toys to occupy him. Have blocks at hand, or let him play with a paper-knife, or something new to him which he cannot hurt; make, in short, his obedience to your rule pleasant and unconscious, and you will be strengthening a habit which will assert its power when obedience cannot be made agreeable.

If you do not succeed in dealing with the child's wilfulness at any one time, do not be afraid to acknowledge you were less wise than the occasion demanded; another time you will do better. Training children is so great an art, that with every desire and effort to get proficient in it, some mistakes are almost unavoidable, and you must not be unduly discouraged by them. I repeat—make the daily routine of the child's life pleasant to him, its duties inevitable, and you will find obedience will follow your just demand of it.

With children whose training has not begun in the cradle, respect certain considerations in the exaction of obedience. Do not make a multitude of laws. With children, as with adults, legislation, unless absolutely necessary, is pernicious.

Do not command what you have not the power to enforce : in a struggle of wills the adult is always liable to defeat. A child, as the weaker, can certainly be turned out of a room, or locked into a closet, but you cannot control its muscles or its inclinations by force ; unless you can touch the motive power within it you are actually powerless. Almost before it can understand the full force of what you say, explain to the child the reason of the obedience you claim. The youngest healthy child is a reasoning creature, and if he sees why a thing is or is not to be done, his obedience will not only be more readily given, but he will gradually gather the faith that those about him are guided in their claims upon him by a loving desire for his welfare. In saying this I do not forget that the finest obedience is given in faith, supported only by the authority claiming it ; but the reason is a valuable aid in training towards the unreasoning, soldier-like form of the virtue. Do not ask of a child tasks beyond his strength. Remember his weakness, and that every power and virtue in him is necessarily feeble : if you do not apportion his trial to his powers, active or passive, you deserve defeat, and run the risk of injuring the growing goodness of the little one. When it is hard for him to give up his will to yours, encourage him by your

loving approbation ; let him feel the sunlight of your love in his struggle to do right.

There is another, and too much neglected, influence in the management of children which we should not fail to exercise—*keeping faith* with them. They ought to be able to have entire reliance upon our word. I need scarcely say therefore, it is eminently necessary we should promise nothing rashly, either of good or evil. We hear a child confide to his companion, “Mamma said she’d punish me if I slid down those banisters, but I’m sure she won’t, you know.” Or, to encourage a child’s effort at self-government in some direction, the mother promises to carry him up to bed ; and we hear, “Mother promised to carry me up to bed her own self, but she has forgotten and gone out !” Adults are quick to acknowledge the necessity of steadfastness in government for themselves ; it should not be difficult to recognize the same necessity in the management of children.

There is another form of keeping faith with children which will present itself to the educator. Their minds, as we have seen, soon become occupied with some of the mysteries which surround them—death, immortality, but especially their own origin, moves their wonder and curiosity. And in answering their questions, we have very

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often to face the impossibility of telling them all the truth about things unfitting their age, while it is incumbent upon us to guard the trust existing between them and us, and equally necessary that we should respond to their desire for information in such a manner as to set their minds at rest. The ordinary way of dealing with these difficulties is either to say, "Little children must not ask questions;" or to try the effect of evasion, "The storks bring little children;" or, "Your baby sister was found in the cabbage bed;" or, "The doctor brought baby in the night." To either mode of answering, the objections are obvious. To a child whose questions are habitually encouraged, the first is absurd, while evasion will scarcely satisfy intelligent children. Loyal to the faith existing between parents and children, I think it is better to explain that there are many things we will gladly tell the child when he is older, but that we must both wait for that time. Or we may make him feel that the new baby is a heavenly gift to his mother, in such a manner as to arrest further questioning. But different children require varied treatment; I have known one sweet mother who, with a directness and courage peculiarly beautiful, gave her child, in answer to his questions on this subject, something of the facts in simple,

grave words, impressing him at the same time that it was a matter sacred to him and to her, and not to be lightly spoken of. Her confidence was rightly taken and justified. Children have a wonderful instinctive tact which may be relied on to check questions on such subjects, if once we communicate to them the serious reverence with which we ourselves regard them.

We must habitually train ourselves to remember that our intercourse with children must always be guided and controlled by a sense of our educational responsibility to them : they are so completely in our power, so unable to alter influences affecting themselves. Grown-up people are too apt to ignore the presence of children. They are perhaps full of their own interests and wishes, and forget that children are not bits of inanimate furniture. I need hardly point out the many injurious ways in which this forgetfulness acts. The acute little listeners hear perhaps information and gossip, harmless enough in itself, but not fitting their age or discretion ; or things are said in their presence which are destructive of their reverence for others, or of their freedom from conventional prejudices. This is irreparable mischief. In other instances the results are less morally harmful, but more embarrassing. " Oh, Mr. S." a child may say, " I heard mother say

you was going to marry with Miss A.;" or, "I heard Uncle R. say that Mr. D. was an old curmudgeon." And it is whispered (also in the presence of the children) "that little pitchers have long ears," and we must beware of "les enfants terribles." I have known a sensitive child suffer a small martyrdom from having subjects unfit for her to hear discussed in her presence, both her conscience and her sense of refinement being outraged. Children of even four or five years old are fairly reasonable creatures, and are certainly full of sensitive feeling. Their self-poise and self-respect are grievously wounded by their very existence being ignored. You hear a not unkind mother say of the child at her knee, "Oh, don't ask what is the matter; Mary is sadly out of temper to-day;" or, "She has been sulking ever since the morning." Now, if we try to understand either state of feeling in the child, we may discover it is suffering physically, or has been jarred mentally by some stupidity on the part of its nurse, or is smarting under treatment it believes to be unjust. It wounds it deeply to have mis-statements made concerning it to indifferent visitors, or to feel that the grown-up world about it has no comprehension of it, and is full of injustice.

Again, granting that a child is sulky and ill-

humoured, we are bound to shield his dignity, his reputation, so to speak, from indifferent visitors ; and he has a right to feel hurt and angry if we fail in this consideration. Moreover, our influence is seriously impaired if the child finds that we can speak lightly to others of some fault which to him we have made of grave importance. M. Taine, in a sketch of Prosper Mérimée, tells how once when, as a boy, he was severely scolded for some fault, and had been sent out of the room in tears and deep dejection, he heard through the door, a laugh, and some one saying, "The poor child ! how angry he thinks us !" "L'idée d'être dupe le revolta," adds M. Taine ; and he refers Mérimée's self-repression, his suspicion of confidence in after-life, to such treatment. "To act and write as though always in presence of an indifferent or mocking spectator, or be himself that spectator," was a marked trait of his character.

CHAPTER IV.

THE EMPLOYMENT AND OCCUPATION OF CHILDREN.

"Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' darling of a pigmy size !

* * * *

"Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest."

Wordsworth.

"I deem it wise
To make him Nature's playmate."

Coleridge.

"ANATOMISTS tell us," says Professor Bain in his "Education as a Science," "that the brain grows with great rapidity up to seven years of age ; it then attains an average weight of forty ounces (in the male). The increase is much slower between seven and fourteen, when it attains forty-five ounces; still slower from fourteen to twenty, when it is very near its greatest size. Consequently, of the more difficult intellectual exercises, some that would be impossible at five or six, are easy at eight, through the fact of brain growth alone."

This important fact of rapid brain growth underlies the theory of educationalists concerning the time when children should begin to receive serious and systematic instruction—should begin their “book-learning.” But like many other great facts, it yet affects too little the practical mode of education. It is true we are shocked to know that Swift could read a chapter of the Bible at three years old, and that John Stuart Mill learned Greek at the same age; but there still obtains a great deal too much anxiety, at home and at school, to press children on to learn from books, and very little apparent content with the period of fruitful idleness that every child should enjoy. The fact that Professor Bain thus mentions, would seem meant to teach us, that we must watch with the greatest care external manifestations of the development of the brain; that we must avoid stimulating a growing intelligence; and, content to let it grow after its own fashion, hesitate to press upon it our means of development.

Guided by these fundamental rules, we shall come to recognize these first years as a time above all valuable in the child's education. It is a time given him to learn directly from objects, instead of at second hand from books; a time of practice for the senses, when through the concrete

the child arrives at ideas of the abstract ; when he is, in fact, learning after his own fashion to spell out the Universe, and discovering, bit by bit, his relation to the great system of things. Our parental care can assist the child to learn these first great lessons : how can we dare to mar them ?

This, then, is the task set before us : to see that the infant is supplied with material for its observation, to help its experiments upon this material when help is needed, and to secure free exercise for its activity in all possible directions.

During the first two years of his life the child takes matters pretty much into his own hands. He is learning nearly all through his waking hours, but he learns almost independently of us. The light, and colour, and sounds which attracted his earliest observation, continue to be his study as he grows older ; indeed everything which his senses discover awakens his wonder, becomes food for his experiments repeated over and over again, and the results are laid up in the storehouse of his memory. The use of every muscle, and combination of muscles, has to become familiar, and then perfect, by constant repetition ; he first grasps the finger extended to him, then he draws the object grasped to his mouth, but he has to learn, through many mistakes, the distances that lie between his hand, or his mouth, and surround-

ing objects. When he first tries to crawl, to stand, or to walk, when he begins to make articulate sounds, his activity is again increased, and his days are full of the new accomplishments. We have to do little more than to encourage his self-sought lessons indoors, and out of doors, to learn, as Dr. Abbott¹ wisely warns us, not to distract his observation by a too rapid change of objects, and to be ready with tender patience to carry him again and again to one spot or another, to let him handle, or smell, or hear the same thing over and over again. The other day I showed a baby of eleven months a vase full of chrysanthemums of varied colours. The sight was so full of interest to her it occupied her delighted attention for nearly an hour. She watched the flowers solemnly; then I lifted the vase close to her little face, and bade her smell them. She wished to grasp one of them, but I showed her how to touch one and another lovely disc of colour with her tiny finger without harming it. We put the vase in its place again, but once more she wished to have the flowers near to her; once more the examination of them went on; again her sight, and smell, and touch went through their pretty exercise, and her sweet attention was given with a grave, pleased happiness. It was a typical example of a child's

¹ "Hints on Home Teaching."

undisturbed, but assisted, learning from the objects around it.

When the child seems to demand fresh material for his activity, we must be guided by the interest he shows in what we present to him, and furnish him with that which seems next in the order demanded by his natural development. Size, form, number, weight, spaces, will probably next attract his curiosity, and lead him to comparison. Pictures, particularly those in colour prepared by the good artists who have taken this department of education into their hands, Walter Crane, the Caldecotts, Kate Greenaway, show the child in another form, the objects which are his alphabet, and he listens with delight to the stories we tell about the cats and dogs, the trees and children, in the favourite books. His sympathy is awakened, while his eyes are instructed and charmed.

But very soon the little one will demand more of us ; observation, however fascinating, will not alone satisfy him ; he must himself be busy. Toys and games become his serious occupation. With perhaps an inherited sense of the dignity of labour, he begins to foreshadow the employment of his later years ; his imagination is impressed by the work of the grown-up world, and he invents mimic imitation of it. Supply a boy with wooden bricks, and he will build towers, and bridges

farm-buildings, and railways. Give him a Noah's ark, and he will arrange a stock-farm, or Zoological Gardens ; a cart, and he becomes the carrier, or the miller. With a doll, the girl simulates the mother's labour of love ; she carries it in her arms, she rocks and sings to it, presently she will wash and sew for it ; no trouble is too much for her. Give a child a garden, and though he may first begin by pulling up the plants to see if they are growing, he will presently become a landscape or market gardener. Children will find and make for themselves in games an infinite variety of employment if we leave them to themselves with constant regard to their spontaneous activity.

And *training* in all directions should go on with new activities. It costs a child less effort, perhaps, to destroy than to preserve or construct. The baby is tired of its pictures, and throws them hastily away, creasing or tearing the pages, perhaps. It lies with us to smooth the rumpled paper, to put away the book for another time, with a playful word, to show the little one its mother's love for useful or beautiful things. The blocks that have been used in the creation of homesteads and railways are scattered over the floor, a new interest has come, and with a child's natural want of foresight, the toys so cherished a few moments

before, are now only troublesome, and to be got rid of at any cost. The mother must remind him that he will need his darling bricks again, and she will lovingly encourage him to bravery and the effort to put them back in their box, helping him the while. Or the little one, from perhaps some physical cause, is restless, and bemoans himself. "I am tired of playing at this." "What shall I do now?" or, "I want something to do, mummie." Kneeling on the floor beside him, the mother can re-awaken his flagging pleasure in his game, can rouse his imagination about it, direct it with fresh interest. The cart can be travelling to and from a new place, or it can become, in the wonderful colour of a child's fancy, the instrument of another merchant. Presently, when the effort has been made, the mother, if she be wise, will avoid straining the patience too far, and will herself suggest some fresh game.

Self-dependence, patience, perseverance, steady effort to understand a thing, to get the best out of it, determination to overcome difficulties, should be first learned by children in their play, when they become old enough to make conscious effort; and these beginnings of character should gain in power every day.

In the Kindergarten, we have a system which recognizes the necessity of activity in little chil-

dren, and formulates their occupations ; and when nurses are trained for their business, and have at command some of Frœbel's wise and beautiful ideas, the life of tiny children will, doubtless, gain enormously in intelligence and happiness. The ideas conveyed in concrete form, the gentle leading from one mental step to another, the association of children in games and occupations, are all delightful training, if kept subservient to a paramount conception of education. But one of the great difficulties in this period of life is to avoid making occupations obligatory, and over-systematizing. We have to respect the spontaneity of the child ; we have to be careful not to disturb unnecessarily its healthy absorption in its own ideas. Children "grow in sun and shower," in "the silence and the calm of mute, insensate things ;" they have spiritual food imperceptible to our coarser sight, and we must often stand aside and meddle not. I remember one of my own children, a little girl of six, being taken to the sea-side one summer, and her spending not only hours, but days in delighted contemplation of the new beauty around her. Sitting under the foliage of some tamarisks, she looked down at the sunny sea, talking to herself and her doll ; she could scarcely be persuaded to come in to her meals. I have another vivid picture of a period, when another

child seemed to live in his own thoughts, sitting on early summer mornings, in his little chair, under a verandah, watching the exquisite life of green things and animals around him. One such morning he looked so quietly happy, that I put my arms round him, and said, "You're a happy little boy to enjoy this sweet day." He replied, as though he had been pondering deeply on the subject, "The cows are more amusing animals than the sheep, mummie." The sheep were lying resting in the shade.

A young teacher, experienced in High School and other teaching, was remarking to me the other day, that this sort of quiet life, when the child is allowed to grow after its own fashion, receptive of the best natural influences, is almost lost now in the pressure of intellectual instruction. The modern children are sent in their earliest years to Kindergarten, and then to High Schools, or their equivalents; examinations begin early, and follow one another in rapid succession. The little ones have no time to think their own thoughts, select their own intellectual food, or develop after their own pattern. They have not even time for real, refreshing play, this young lady lamented, "It makes me quite sad. We are no longer bringing up real, sweet, fresh children."

If this opinion is justified by wide experience,

and that it is so there is some evidence to show, we may be assured that no possession of knowledge, no intellectual cleverness, will compensate for that want of assimilation of influence which is necessary to the growth of fine human beings. It is with the higher life of young creatures as with their purely animal life : we can supply the body with food, but it is the chemistry of the digestive apparatus which converts this into nutrition ; a more subtle chemistry is at work to assimilate instruction, knowledge, influence, into material for the development of faculty, of character, of spiritual nobility.

As one means of combining occupation and training with no stress upon the brain, we may bring into our service the desire to be useful which is so strong in children. This is shown indirectly, as we have noticed, in the nature of their play. It is observable in walks, which are apt to be very monotonous and dull, if taken merely as a duty to health. In the country, it is true, they may become delightful, informal rambles in search of flowers, ferns, or other natural objects ; but in bad weather, a purpose in going out, a commission for their mother, shopping, something which makes the child of use, is as valuable in satisfying the moral sense as it is in giving interest to physical exercise. Easy household work, adapted to the

strength of children, is another excellent factor in training. Nothing is more delightful to children than exercise of this kind; brushing with a toy brush, dusting (learning delicacy of handling the while), giving out stores with their mother, filling tea-caddies and sugar-basins, all fulfil this sense of service. I have watched the delight of little maidens of five, six, and older, who were allowed on holidays to have a wash of dolls' clothes, and who, under the shade of a tree, with their tub, and soap and water, went through the various stages of the process with happy industry, stretching their delicate drying lines, and afterwards ironing the tiny clothes with toy irons, heated safely by their nurse. A little cooking stove, given to these same children by a German friend, was also an incitement to great efforts of skill; Liliputian pancakes, puddings, &c., were produced by its help, to the triumph of the small cooks, who doubtless learned in the amusement something of order, patience, and contrivance.

Reading aloud to children occupies them in the most fruitful manner at this period of life. To those little ones who have been accustomed to listen to stories from the time they could understand a simple narrative at all, the effort of listening with intelligence and attention is slight; to those with whom this has not been a habit, some

little effort is required to listen with pleasure. But some of the most cherished associations of the family life often cluster round the "children's hour" of reading; association with the father and mother's time of leisure, with the bright fire-side, or the sunny afternoon under trees, with the scent and sounds of happy summer around, when the children sit entranced with the stories of Grimm or Andersen, the "Feats on the Fjord," or the "Water Babies." Perhaps to such readings may be traced the beginning of a love of books, a delight in literature, which is one of the supreme happinesses of life. In the same educational rank I would also put the learning of poetry by rote, the learning it from the lips of the mother. I do not mean the repeating of mere rhyme. I have a great objection to giving children inferior literature. I shrink from teaching them doggerel of any description after they can understand anything better than the couplets we sing to them in lullabies. Fortunately, in the abundant collections of poetry that have been made for children, while there are many poems entirely beyond their interest, there are a number of our finest poems which appeal to the world of children as thoroughly as to older readers. There are others scattered amidst the treasures of English literature, and it is these which should be taught to children. The delight

in rhythm is strong in little children, and simple ideas clothed in this form appeal very quickly to them,—I have often been surprised to notice how quickly and strongly. I have found children between four and six years of age, love, and repeat, with touching emphasis and beauty, a large variety of English poems, the Percy Ballads as a matter of course, and Macaulay's fine modern ballads; some of Browning's lyrics, many of Tennyson's, and scattered simple gems of Shakespeare, Coleridge, Wordsworth, Keats, and many others.¹

To this time of learning without lessons I should point as the period of all others for acquiring fluency in speaking foreign languages. Never again will it be so easy for the little ones to learn a language, as it should be learned, by hearing it spoken. The time will probably come when the speaking a modern language will be put in its natural place, *before*, not *after*, the learning it from books, and when opportunities of acquiring modern European languages will be made a matter of international educational interest.

¹ As there exist many opinions as to what is fit for very little children (witness the numerous collections and selections made for them), I may mention some poems which I have always found great favourites:—Tennyson's "When cats run home," Wordsworth's "Lines written in March," Browning's "The Year's at the Spring," from "Pippa Passes," Ariel's Song Coleridge's "What the Birds Say."

For the present, parents will do wisely to make great efforts to give to their little ones the real possession of French and German that can be got from the companionship of French and German maids or teachers. Few acquirements will prove in after-life more useful or enjoyable; and languages can be learned with perfect ease in the ordinary daily life of the household. A child so taught may sometimes translate a French idiom into English speech, or give a German turn to a sentence; but this is a slight disadvantage in comparison with the knowledge of the language gained, and the natural ease with which it is acquired.

Singing, as a training of ear and voice, and as a health-giving exercise, should be encouraged in young children. We cannot tell how early the pleasing sense of musical cadence affects a child. In some children it is blended with the earliest, haziest recollection of life at all, as though they had been literally "cradled in sweet song;" and we may be sure that the hearing of musical sounds, and singing in association with others, are for the child, as for the adult, powerful influences in awakening sympathetic emotion, and pleasure in associated action.

Drawing and painting, from the first rude daubs of colour and primitive scratches which children

delight in, are employments which have educational value. With a little encouragement the sight may be trained to notice slight agreements or differences in form and colour, and the hand led to use both as primitive means of expression.

For guidance in the more direct teaching without books, which will almost inevitably be demanded by children in cultured homes, parents should read the early chapters of Rousseau's "Émile;"¹ for with all the writer's faults of conception and practice, no one I know of has more thoroughly insisted upon the child's learning directly from nature and natural laws. Treading in Rousseau's steps, we must seize the occasions which arise in the daily life of every family, for giving assistance to such learning; and this assistance is given best of all in the country, where, if it were possible, all children should live for the first ten years, at least, of their lives. A child should only be employed or amused indoors when the weather, or the time of year or day makes it impossible for it to be out of doors. The physical exercises which belong to out-of-door life have immense fascination for children; and the educator will do wisely to teach and encourage every physical art or skill in its due time and season. Dancing, swinging, climbing, riding, rowing, swimming, for girls as well as for boys,

¹ Published by D. C. Heath & Co., Boston.

will not only promote physical development and health, but will foster courage and those mental and moral qualities necessary to the acquirement of any skill, or the practice of it in association with companions.

The animals in the home of the child will furnish many self-sought lessons: the examination of "pussy's" teeth and fur, and retractile claws, will suggest comparison of the differences to be found in the spaniel or retriever; and the child's interest will be led to the big cats and dogs—the larger carnivora—to be found in the countries away from England. The horses and cows will be examples of other kinds of animals, and gradually the whole zoological divisions, with their classes and families, will be almost imperceptibly learned. The mother will illustrate each step by pictures, visits, when possible, to the Zoological Gardens, and descriptions of the habitat of foreign animals. The same process will go on with the familiar birds, reptiles, insects, and plants. The rice pudding at dinner may suggest questions as to the food stuffs, or where rice comes from; and the mother will procure pictures or examples of the cereals: she will tell the child of the cultivation of rice in the plains of Lombardy and Patna, and will try to make him realize, in a picturesque, simple manner, the wonders which lie under the

familiar objects of home. Plants and animals will lead by an easy association of ideas to geography. The mother will try to make the child realize in this direction also what is different from his own experience. She will set his imagination to work, she will give him material for geographical ideas in the concrete; she will take him to a common and show him what a miniature plain is, and allow him to make for himself a range of mountains, with its spurs and valleys; or let him picture, in an old gravel-pit, the level of the sea, with bays and capes, islands and isthmuses. Then a map, first of the room, then of the village or town, then of the country, and so on, becomes a symbol illuminated by ideas.

Sets of real measures are one of the most delightful of toys, and teach in another direction. A child will enjoy measuring a room or a lawn, when he has mastered the divisions of the foot or yard measure. He will be happy in proving for himself that eight ounces equal the half pound of sugar, and two pints one quart of water. Fractions are no difficulty when thus taught in the concrete. The idea of square and cubic measures are at once clear, if both are shown by a wooden box made a cubic foot in size, with a lid divided into the 144 inches. Number early attracts the attention of children; and Mr. Sonnenschein's

“Number Pictures” will illustrate, in ways delightful to them, numbers up to twelve. The use of his cubes and staves will carry them further in the appreciation of number ; but every step in this, as in all other subjects, should be taken upon the child’s lead, never before. Simple geometrical ideas will be helped by the use of the Kindergarten sticks and cubes ; and the placing of these will exercise the imagination and tax the ingenuity and patience of the child, besides giving him occupation day after day. Children taught in this way invent endless games for themselves. They will cause rivers to flow through their gardens and create fountains ; they will make locks and deltas ; and though they may perchance neglect to turn off a tap, and will often cover themselves with mud, what happy hours will be spent by them, in learning, or verifying a few facts for themselves !

The easy, natural teaching of physical laws in obedience to the child’s demand for it, can be pursued indefinitely. The only barrier to such instruction lies in the scientific ignorance of the generality of parents. Indeed, such lessons demand of parents a great deal besides knowledge. The teaching must be clear, simple, natural, picturesque ; it must be given in answer to questions, and by encouraging, not stifling, the child’s desire

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for information. It must not be given in preaching; the formal didactic fathers and mothers of the type to be found in the books of Mrs. Marcet and Miss Edgeworth are happily out of fashion, and we do not desire to revive the school. Parents will be assured of their success in this kind of teaching, by the vivid interest with which their children will pursue these beginnings into the wider studies of the years that come after; and by the happiness which attends the acquisition of ideas, and tends to make the life of every day joyful in activity, love, and reverence.

CHAPTER V.

SOME CARDINAL VIRTUES.—REVERENCE.

“Let parents then bequeath to their children, not riches, but the spirit of reverence.”

Plato's Laws, Book V. (Jowett).

IN the story of Christ placing the child in the midst of the disciples disputing who should be greatest, we have a typical example of the ideal attitude of childhood. Without a thought of self-aggrandizement, wholly unconscious, humble, receptive, the little one stands by the side of the great Teacher, a rebuke to those who were full of selfish thoughts, an example of that mental state that must be reached before the adult mind can approach perfection. In its earliest stages of development we see that the child exhibits this ideal attitude. It is helpless, and it seeks protection; it is ignorant, and it seeks to learn, and seems to the vision of those older—

“Trailing clouds of glory . . .
From God who is our home.”

But soon its individuality asserts itself, its activity

increases, and with the exercise of new powers, its sense of importance to those around it, and delight in their appreciation keeps pace. In more or less degree, it becomes cognizant of the false estimates and conventional standards of the world outside it.

A new task lies before us ; we have to guard its humility, to teach it the true proportion of things in the mental and moral worlds ; we have to maintain its childlike attitude by training its reverence, that mental state in which the spiritual nature is fit to receive new truth and new influence ; that state in which individuality perceives its small and lowly place in the great scheme of things, in which self is lost in some great idea.¹

It is a significant fact that neither of the two prominent modern writers on education—Mr. Herbert Spencer and Professor Bain—treats of reverence in its relation to moral education. I believe the word does not occur in the chapters treating of that division of their subject. The

¹ "Yet, however doubtful may be its position, if estimated by its bearing on happiness and progress, there are few persons who are not conscious that no character can attain a supreme degree of excellence in which a reverential spirit is wanting. Of all the forms of moral goodness, it is that to which the epithet 'beautiful' may be most emphatically applied. Yet the habits of advancing civilization are, if I mistake not, on the whole, inimical to its growth."—*Lcky's "History of European Morals."*

omission may be characteristic of the modern spirit, and the critical attitude which is born of it, or it may be that the ideal of human excellence conceived by these writers on education does not correspond with that standard which exists vaguely in men's minds. It is true Professor Bain says,¹ "The briefest glance at moral teaching must not omit the topic of moral ideals. It is in morality more especially that the teacher works by putting forward grand, lofty, and even unapproachable ideals; the supposition being that the charm and attractiveness of these will make a far more powerful impression than any unvarnished statement of consequences." But we fail to find in his "classification" of "cardinal virtues," his apprehension of "motives," or his survey of the "relationships of society," any strong stimulus to the approach of these ideals. We rise from reading his chapter on "Moral Education" with the melancholy impression that, just at the most critical point of our task, we are left by our guide without any sure support, and with no fixed aim for the guidance of our steps. "The earth is salted by the heroism of the few," he says; and we must be content, we read between the lines, if we produce average men and women; we shall then be sure to have well-in-

¹ "Education as a Science."

structed, intelligent, honest citizens, in whom the self-regarding and social motives will be well balanced, the emotions admirably controlled, and the affairs of life conducted with a due regard of all obligations. "Remember," says Mr. Herbert Spencer, "that the aim of discipline should be to produce a self-governing being." "The independent English boy is the father of the independent Englishman." "What is it that we aim to do? Is it not that education, of whatever kind, has for its proximate end to prepare a child for the business of life—to produce a citizen who, while he is well conducted, is also able to make his way in the world?"

But, alas! for the results, if we educate for what may be safely compassed with an eye open to the mere "business of life." It is true, we must train so that our boy will grow up to take a useful and honourable place in the world, that he should be self-restrained, governing himself by the help of his conscience, that he should become a good citizen with sufficient will, foresight, and prudence to shape circumstances, rather than be shaped essentially by them; but we desire this for him because we aim at the greater which includes it. We will, with God's help, try our best to train the boy for manhood, fitting him for work and usefulness in the century in which

he lives, but otherwise possessing character and aspirations which belong to human excellence at any time, and in any position. We cannot assuredly educate him, with all our pains, into a finer human being than he is planned to become; but when can we assure ourselves we have fulfilled the original plan of his nature? When can we say we have reached the limits assigned to its development in any one direction? It is a reverential attitude towards the possibilities in the child's nature which will make great results in education possible.

Going back to a time of perhaps less doubt and criticism than the present, we find Milton holding this attitude, and speaking with far less uncertainty either of what we should attempt in education, or of the means to attain it. "The end then of learning is . . . to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love Him, to imitate Him, to be like Him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue." And again, "Here the main skill and ground-work will be to temper them with such lectures and explanations upon every opportunity as may lead and draw them to willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue; stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men and worthy patriots, dear to God and famous

to all ages." And again still, "Being perfect in the knowledge of personal duty."

We find the same thought expressed by Plato,¹ "Every man ought to make up his mind that he will be one of the followers of the God; there can be no doubt of that." "Then what life is agreeable to God and becoming to His followers? One only, according to the old saying that 'like agrees with like, with measure, measure. . . . Now God is the measure of all things in a sense far higher than any man, as they say, can ever hope to be. And he who would be dear to God must, as far as possible, be like Him, and such as He is.'" Now here we have given to us "grand, lofty, and even unapproachable ideals," which touch the noblest chords of the human spirit "to fine issues."

I know we get on very difficult ground when we seek to discover how far the present want of fixity and earnestness in religious beliefs has affected the ideal in human excellence. But what we have to do as educators is undoubtedly to find an ideal of perennial grandeur, and to train towards it; whatever we then attain will be at least in the right direction. And parents, whether they believe in a personal God, or in Humanity, or Law, or Natural Religion of any kind, provided

¹ Plato's *Laws*, Book IV. (Jowett).

that they have a real, earnest belief which governs the secret springs of their life, possess the true source of influence.

The first dawn of reverence comes vaguely to the child through its relation to its parents; it can conceive no abstract notion of goodness, love, wisdom. But the time comes with a larger horizon, when the young creature is forced to measure his parents against other standards. Another idea of perfection arises in him, an idea his parents themselves have fostered, and gradually and naturally his love and respect grows into another and bigger, but more indefinite emotion — reverence. A child will very early touch upon the mysteries of its being, it will not long be content with the small horizon of the visible and the concrete. It will seek with its infant intelligence to dive into the origin of things, and to grasp with its childish thought—death, immortality, omnipotence. Here again is a beginning which shall lead him, a child-like learner, through the wonders of life, and even to the portals of the grave. How infinitely beautiful and touching is the duty laid upon parents in dealing with this growth of spiritual life! How sacred is the obligation to deal with it in perfect truth! I have known parents imbued with the doubt and scepticisms of the modern life, who yet thought

it good that their children should believe, while they could, the orthodox religious views of the time, supposing it to have a healthy influence upon character; and so the Bible reading, and grace, and prayers were continued in the family life with a sort of fetish devotion.

I have little doubt that this want of truth between parents and children must come to a disastrous end. We can only really teach what we believe ourselves, and, whether that belief embraces much or little, the reality with which we hold it will make it a religious influence, or the reverse. Let parents be assured that young human creatures crave for spiritual food and guidance under some form or other. I have known parents who have ignored such craving, believing, in their own well-poised philosophy, that it came only from the teaching of priests or bigots. And they have lived to discover their children taking theological yokes and burdens of belief upon them, which far transcended in severity and narrowness the theology they first feared for them.

But reverence is not to be limited to the attitude towards one great idea or personality. It is the very basis of human excellence, and we have to foster it in the training of all intellectual and moral qualities. Throughout every stage of instruction, we must guard the humility of the

child ; we must impress him through his perception and imagination with the vastness of knowledge, and the small amount he can ever hope to master. So impressed, he is not likely to think himself very clever or very grand if he makes a little step in attainment. Do not criticize people before him, particularly those who supply any of his needs—servants or teachers. I have known children so prone to dwell on the small details and defects of those about them, that larger virtues and goodness were entirely lost sight of. A child should live as much as possible in “admiration,” and should be taught that respect for humanity which is the basis of all true courtesy. In many small ways this may be made apparent to the child. The old type of “manners” is replaced by a more natural and more affectionate relation between parents and children, who no longer stand with formal respect behind the chairs of their fathers and mothers and address them as “Sir” or “Madam.” But if Punch is a true mirror of manners, the change has been made with a vicious jerk. Fathers are too often old “Governors,” who “fork out” liberal supplies of money, and are looked upon as the convenient source of much luxury. The mothers are a different edition of the same type, chiefly anxious for the worldly prosperity of their children, and

possessing little claim upon their respect or real love. It is obvious that we as parents must be worthy of respect, or we cannot claim it with much expectation of getting it. Nevertheless, it is hurtful to the training of reverence if we permit unchecked, as many fond mothers thoughtlessly do, any want of the outward respect due to parents. In words and manners we must teach the child reverential courtesy to the old, the weak, and to those who serve him. Service must be regarded as a favour, a kindness done to him, to be requested, never a right to be ordered. Guard a boy's chivalrous respect for women; for servant-maids as well as for his sisters; in literature and in life seek that his ideal of womanhood claims all that is most worthy of reverence in him. Stimulate reverence for great living men and women. The reverence of people who are realized to be alive at the present moment is a stronger motive for noble aspirations than a feeling awakened towards heroes whose lives can be less easily compared to those of the children. It is said that Pope never forgot the distant sight of Dryden at a book-sale, and it is a great happiness to allow children some personal knowledge of those they are prepared to reverence. To take an intelligent child to a lecture by a great scholar or discoverer is not wasted trouble.

Little children suffer greatly from shyness or fear in the presence of strangers ; but if they live much in their mothers' rooms they should be led to overcome the first impulsive rudeness, to continue their occupations, and receive kindly advances with respectful quietude. It is bad training for the child, to let it stand with pouting lips, or its fingers in its mouth, sullenly defiant, or intrusive with offensive remarks such as, "I don't like that lady, she's ugly." The mother will do well to remark upon the kindness of her friends who make advances to the children, to notice some pleasant trait in them, and encourage the little ones to do some small office for the visitors ; the handing of a tea-cup, or moving a book, will make the children lose their self-consciousness in another feeling.

The want of reverence which is often declared to be most characteristic of modern children is attributed to the undue importance given by anxious parents to their position in the household. It is true that the welfare of their children, even in the slightest particular, is of the greatest moment to conscientious parents ; but it is the interest of their moral and spiritual natures which should be paramount, and these will never require the sacrifice of other people's convenience. They will never allow the peace and comfort of guests

to be ignored in attention to trivial concerns of the children of the family. And if these best interests were always kept in view, we should not see, as unhappily we often see now, the teacher whose intellect the parents profess to admire, served at table after a child of six years old, or permitted to step into a carriage after her. Perhaps the best training in reverence the children of a family can have, will be in sharing in the life of their parents, in being allowed to understand, as far as possible, their aims and hopes in life, in seeing them always ready to give up their own gratification, even the pleasure of their children's society, for the sake of some duty, or in allegiance to some idea. If they see that the life around them is something better than the gratification of selfish pleasures, or even the fulfilment of immediate duties, if they see that it means losing self in devotion to what is higher and better than oneself, they will be helped to keep in mind the unapproachable ideal, and, fulfilling the truth contained in Hawthorn's beautiful story of the Great Stone Face, they will gradually grow in its likeness, and learn the truth that Ruskin has expressed, "This is the thing which I know . . . that in reverence is the chief joy and power of life."¹

¹ Lectures on Art, "The Relation of Art to Religion."

CHAPTER VI.

SOME CARDINAL VIRTUES.—TRUTH.

“Truth is the beginning of every good thing, both in heaven and on earth.”

Plato's Laws, Book V. (Jowett).

THE apprehension of truth is an intellectual effort, not an impulse of the moral nature; and it is necessary to bear this in mind in judging correctly of the virtue of truthfulness. “Truth is the beginning of every good thing:” “Truth is the summit of being,” says Emerson. “Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth,” writes Bacon in his Essay. Such sentences come into our mind when we ask ourselves, how it is that truthfulness should be regarded by the thoughtful educator, and by the popular sentiment, as such an essential goodness in character as to be the salt wherewith everything else shall be salted. Truth in character consists of that quality of mind which seeks to

recognize the ultimate reality of things—the facts which have their origin in God—and attempts to form a harmony between this great background of final truth and the individual life. It is this mental quality in man, this attempted interpretation of the highest and best he *knows*, which claims our reverence and reliance, and leads us to put so high a value upon the expression of his knowledge, of his interpretation.

We seize here the idea that lies at the foundation of the anxiety about truthfulness which pervades most parental minds. We need not be surprised that this anxiety is generally unperceptive and unreasoning. Few discern what essential truthfulness implies, or trace its alliance with the simple telling of truth. But the educator perceives that while his supreme duty lies in cultivating the spirit of truth in the child, in securing that clearness of the intellectual vision, that purity of the moral nature necessary to the reception and transmission of truth, he must also obtain the accurate expression of his knowledge, *i.e.*, he must train him to be habitually truthful; he must “tell the truth.” And indeed, unless a little child has inherited some crookedness of character, or is influenced by any of the motives we shall presently examine, it is natural to him to express in words

truth as he perceives it. It is after-influence which causes him to become an unfaithful medium. At the same time we cannot expect that the precious nature of truth will appeal to the understanding of very little children; even in the maturity of mortal life we only "see through a glass darkly," and while their intellectual powers are immature and feeble, it is folly to look for anything like true appreciation of that which lies at the foundation of human and eternal relations. Such appreciation must grow with the growth of the whole being. We must be content to see it in its earliest and in its imperfect form, to tend it, and strengthen it. In the course of its growth we must be even prepared to see it waver and falter in its allegiance, and must still sustain our faith in patience, that eventually with the consolidation of character, it will become steady and strong, and, flame-like, embrace "the summit of being."

I have known parents seriously unhappy at the activity of the imagination in their children. Their dramatic power has seemed to them sad evidence of untruthfulness. But such unhappiness is ill-founded. Before the child is burthened with duties and responsibilities, while its own life is unshaped before it, it is free to live in the dear delights and beauty created by its own fancy.

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With the fairy wand of his imagination, he can be an Aladdin rubbing his lamp, or Robinson Crusoe building his hut in the shrubbery, or a hunter stalking buffalo in the copse of the meadow. He will act out for days or weeks the little drama that has seized his fancy, recounting his adventures to his brothers and sisters the while. Or, to enliven a dull walk, he will imagine lions and tigers in the familiar paths near home, and will tell his mother, on his return, with innocent gravity, that he has seen a lion on the common! But the lines between reality and drama are generally clearly defined in the mind of the little actor, and we must playfully enter into the spirit of his play.

In this mimic world of imagination children get an activity of feeling and of intellectual exercise which is fitting them for the life of the big world presently to open to them, and are provided with a wealth of happiness to be found, I believe, in no other way. It is a great mistake to narrow the mind of childhood to the grooves of our sterner and more commonplace existence. The grooves will be formed all too soon, and with them, we will hope, will come the larger horizon, the deeper insight, belonging to increased years. But with the appearance of every new power, we must faithfully maintain our

reverence for nature, and as carefully obey her dictates in leaving the child to live in the charmed world of his imagination, as presently we must set before him the duties which belong to his real position in a world of lessons and other human obligations. We cannot readily limit the part imagination is intended to play in the child's development. It begins to show itself in games and little dramas, but it is the handmaiden of reverence, and helps to shape the "unapproachable ideals" by which, and for which, men live. Even in practical life it may grow to "put a girdle round about the earth in forty minutes," or steer Columbus-like to unknown lands of thought.

In *exaggeration* we get a mild form of untruthfulness which claims our attention; for if the habit is indulged, a child not only becomes accustomed to careless observation and inaccurate statements of facts, but grows to confuse lines of thought. He will tell you, *en façon de parler*, "There are a hundred rooks on the lawn," or, "That snail is half-way down the wall." He does not mean to be untruthful, and it would be very wrong to treat him as though he did. Nevertheless, as a matter of training in observing the fact before him, and of stating his impression of it, we shall do wisely to recall him to the rooks and the snail. "You don't mean a hundred rooks; see, we can count

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them easily. There are only thirty!" or, "You said half-way down the wall; let us measure."

The moral nature becomes more dangerously involved when an untruth is told or acted to gain a purpose. Here a variety of motives come into play, and to judge at all correctly of any departure from truthfulness it is necessary to unravel its motive. With very little children, who cannot yet understand why the obligation of strict truthfulness should be laid upon them, any small motive of convenience, idleness, or desire is sometimes sufficient to evoke from them a false statement, or a misleading colouring. But parents must not lay stress upon these childish aberrations. The inaccuracy probably belongs to a very passing phase in well-trained children, and it will often disappear with better health, or with stronger development of the intellectual faculties; and though we must watch well in such cases, and always keep in view the relation of small things to big, we may do a child a serious wrong if we make much of these childish errors of speech. Our training as a whole will justify itself.

Among motives which instigate a serious want of truthfulness, perhaps the most common is fear. I have endeavoured to show before that this should have no presence in a child's life. In

every direction it degrades the moral nature: in this especially it tends to prevent him remaining a medium of truth. He is guilty of some piece of carelessness, he disobeys an order or breaks a bit of cherished china, and under the influence of fear he denies the fact, and runs the risk of becoming habitually untruthful if the dread of punishment is held over him. There are few children who are made of such naturally heroic stuff as the late Sir Henry Lawrence, who, when enticed by his school-fellows to follow their example and throw a ball in dangerous proximity to a forbidden window, went straight to his master, "doubtless amidst roars of laughter," says his biographer, with, "I have come to say, sir, I have broken a window." Indeed we have no right to expect heroism from average young creatures yet unfledged in morality. We may be happy if our training eventually leads to it.

Love may be almost as powerful a motive to untruth as fear, and some of the best children are tempted by a mistaken idea of chivalrous generosity to screen a companion from the consequences of a fault by an untruth in word or deed. A boy is asked about some wrong-doing that has gone on in his presence, and refuses to state what he knows about it; indeed, he is proud if by some semblance of untruth he can lead his master off

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the scent of discovery. Or a school-fellow uses a "crib," or copies the sum of a companion and passes it for his own; or a boy has spent his allowance, and makes a false excuse to get more money from his father. Here we have another variety of motives leading to untruth in several forms, and the educator cannot shrink from facing the problems brought to him as results of early or mistaken training.

The generality of the world believe that punishment can correct untruthfulness; no discrimination of motive is thought necessary. Unreasonable as it is, the several kinds of the evil are treated in the same manner. Now, an intellectual perception is not made clearer by punishment, although pain may possibly quicken a child's attention to a fact, or may deter him from making a false statement concerning it. But can we reasonably hope to make by punishment a radical change in the mind of one who allows various trivial motives to swerve him from the truth? And this is what we have to set ourselves to do. Suppose we accept as reasonable and discriminating Mr. Herbert Spencer's theory of punishment; and, when a child tells an untruth, refuse it credence for a given period. Would not the child soon get to feel that it was of little moment whether it spoke truth or falsehood, since the consequences

were the same? And would not a bitter sense of injustice and anger and despair rise in its heart, to the shutting out of any germ of better life?

A different result follows from trusting a child. I knew a little girl of three or four who found the first frequent use of her tooth-brush very irksome, and when her mother one day asked her whether she had brushed her teeth, answered "Yes," when she had neglected the duty. Her mother believed her as a matter of course; but the child immediately woke to a sense that she was untruthful to her mother who *trusted* her. She straightway ran to her room for the duty she hated, and afterwards fully deserved the trust she had abused. I knew a French cook once who, after living two years with her mistress, said, like the Rugby boy of Dr. Arnold, "You cannot tell lies to Mrs.—, she always believes you."

Canon Farrar, in the course of a lecture delivered at Cambridge, under the direction of the Teachers' Training Syndicate, told the following story. I take it from the report in the *Journal of Education*:—

"At Harrow, two boys brought me exercises, marked by the same grotesque mistakes. It seemed certain that those exercises could not have been done independently. Both boys

assured me that there had been no copying. One, whom I had considered a boy of high *morale*, assured me of this again and again with passionate earnestness. I said to him, 'If I were to send up those two exercises to any jury in England, they would say that these resemblances could not be accidental, except by something almost like a miracle. But you both tell me that you have not copied. I cannot believe you would lie to me; I must suppose that there has been some extraordinary accident. I shall say no more.' Years after, that boy, then a monitor, said to me, 'Sir, do you remember that exercise in the fourth form?' 'Yes,' I said. 'Well, sir, I told you a lie. It *was* copied. You believed me, and the remembrance of that lie has remained with me, and pained me ever since.' I am inclined to think that boy was more effectually taught, and more effectually punished, than if I had refused to accept his protest." A well-known educationalist took exception in the next number of the *Journal* to Dr. Farrar's treatment of the boy. But I think the result proved that his judgment, however painfully tried, was fully justified.

But again and yet again the question will be pressed upon us, "If ordinary punishments are useless in dealing with untruthfulness, what are we to do? All children cannot come into our

hands free of the taint of untruthfulness ; how can we make a liar truthful ? for it is not to be borne that he remains a liar." First let us begin by banishing from him as far as we can every possible temptation to untruth, whether of fear or desire ; foster his courage, first physically, giving him *tone*. Then, fear being withdrawn, cultivate his first feeble attempts to be morally courageous. Let him see how you rejoice in his efforts to be brave, and lead him from one step to another in courage. In your intellectual teaching impress him with the majesty of truth, and let him feel the heroism of those men and women who, in their simple fidelity to an abstract idea, have chosen martyrdom rather than the gains of unfaithfulness. Lead him to see how by painful labour and enthusiastic devotion investigators and discoverers have added grains of truth to the sum of human knowledge. But, above all, address yourself to his moral nature ; strengthen in it the seeds of rectitude. Hold up to him noble standards of life, and so set yourself to develop the goodness you find there, that the weak, the cowardly, the untrue fades away.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME CARDINAL VIRTUES.—LOVE.

“O’er wayward childhood wouldst thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces ;
Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let them first keep school.”

Coleridge.

FEW things in ordinary life are more touching than the faith shown by children in human goodness. I suppose that foundlings and children from bad homes must be deficient in it, but that it is widely distributed is patent to us all. Persons have little virtue indeed, if they disappoint this faith, or do not justify the appeal made to them by the immaturity and dependence of childhood. The child’s relation to its parents first awakens this trust. At a few weeks old it begins to show happy satisfaction in the presence of its mother, and even distinguishes its father (who does not supply its physical wants) with something of a

dawning affection ; so soon does the young creature put out the feelers of its love. Members of the household, especially other children and kindred with a family voice, or resemblance of manner to its parents, readily engage its attention ; and thus in the centre of family life tender germs of love awake and grow, and show promise of those intense emotions which form the supreme happiness or misery of after-life—emotions which should widen into the love of humanity, and, stretching beyond the visible stimulants of feeling, expend themselves in religious admiration, and love of the unseen Spirit of the Universe. In this direction again, we touch in earliest education tiny threads which stretch beyond the small and the transitory to what is eternal.

At first sight it seems that the natural exercise of the child's affections has been so well provided in its instinctive love for its parents, and in the area of its home, that the educator has little to do in developing this side of its nature ; but we presently discover that a larger capacity of emotion, a finer quality of feeling, lies within our power of training. Affection can never be purely selfish, for its very existence demands a certain surrender of self to an object out of self. But the parental tie in its rudimentary form, only manifests, in common with the mother animals, devotion, protect-

ing care, perhaps passionate attachment. Guided by neither intellectual perceptions nor moral purposes, parents alternately caress and strike their children, and behave to them in every phase of their growth with similar wants of consistency. The higher manifestations of the parental relationship can only be attained by careful self-restraint and culture; it has to grow fit for the obligations laid on it by thought, by insight, by steadfast intention; it has to outgrow the selfishness of love, and see in children, not objects ministering to the gratification of its affection, but put under its care for far other and higher purposes.

In children, too, we have first to take care that their affections grow strong and healthy; next, that they widen, and touch in sympathy many points of life, and lead in aspiration many chords of feeling. How is this to be done? It is tacitly but universally acknowledged, that while other powers of the child may grow under coercion, its affections must develop spontaneously, or not at all. As a general rule I think it is considered of no great consequence if they do not develop. Those who believe in the value of precepts tell children they must "honour their father and their mother," that "Little children (must) love one another," and so on. It is taken for granted, in the case of parents at least, that the affection

of the child for them should spontaneously follow the demand for it. But the sweet gift of love does not come in obedience to a command, nor as a necessary consequence of relationship, and though nature is beneficent in making the first tie between parents and children so close and ready for growth and further development, parents must cultivate these germs of love, and earn their place with their growing children.

I shall shock the susceptibilities of some parents in saying this, but I think upon reflection they will agree with me. They will recall the many cases where no real love, no actual confidence, exists between children and their parents; cases where obedience, reverence, the happy companionship which friendship creates, are all absent, and a hollow semblance of these things shows that an acknowledgment of the actual truth is too painful to face.

Love begets love; and though we sometimes see a child passionately attached to those who care little for it, this is an exception to the rule. Kisses, caresses, the sweet little ways in which tender fathers and mothers give relief to their own feelings of happiness in their children, have not only deep meaning, but real educational influence. They do their part in creating that atmosphere of warmth and love in which the tender feelings ex-

pand and develop. I have known persons of really warm hearts, who seemed to think it their duty to exercise such Puritan self-restraint of feeling towards their children as to make their home so cold, so joyless, so irresponsible, that the existence of "sweetness and light" there seemed impossible. Let us be assured that as plants turn for very life to the sun, the child seeks his nurture in love. We must not be niggards of its expression. We must not be afraid to show him how much we love him, what joy his presence is to us, how dear is the return of his love to us.

Is it necessary, in saying this, to guard against the confusion of ideas which commonly prevails between the love which acts with constant and conscientious regard to the moral welfare of the child, and that form of it which, being chiefly selfish, seeks first its own gratification irrespective of moral considerations? Under the sway of the first, "spoiling" is almost impossible; under that of the second, it is nearly unavoidable.

In conscious and unconscious nurture of the affections, we intensify the natural feeling of the child, we lead its growth; but we reflect what he gives us; he is happy in the return of his love. We have next to encourage in him another form of the affections, where he will get little or no return: to lead him to love those who have no

natural claim upon him, in a word to cultivate in him the "social" affections. In this direction lie the noblest planes of moral life, in which the individual feels for the suffering, the joy, the welfare of others as for his own; and would project his own happiness into the life of thousands unknown to him; or in self-sacrifice lay down his mortal life that others may truly live. To the little child these sublime heights of life are veiled; but we, his guides, who see them dimly afar off, shall fail in our responsibility to him if we do not lead him by gentlest steps on the shining road towards them.

A little child of five or six years came to me one day with a tender expression on her face, and said, "I had a new thought in the village just now when I saw the girl in a blue hood crying, I thought I should like to be of use to every one in the world." I tried to show her that, with all our wish, this was impossible. "We can help one at a time, though," she said, "and that is many altogether." Here is an example of the right chord of unselfish feeling being struck; such vibrations will guide us in our educational work.

In the care of animals we shall find an excellent instrument. In these dumb "brothers and sisters" of his race, the little child has one of his earliest and best interests. In their activity, their

playfulness, their attachment, the child finds a part of the living world at once at the level of his comprehension, and responsive to his sympathy. The home of every child should provide some animal for his playfellow. Whether in motion or at rest, the kitten, a bird, even a guinea-pig, will afford abundant scope for protracted observation, and the needs of its life will lead affection into active kindness, the doing something to promote the welfare of a living thing. The earliest sense of responsibility will grow side by side with this affection ; and though it is unwise to rely too much on this sense in young children, as their protective care of animals is necessarily apt to be impulsive and unreliable, they will gradually learn in the companionship of their parents the importance of feeding the cat, or of giving fresh water to the bird. Many indirect advantages will follow the exercise of such responsibility. The child will learn the value of patience, of punctuality, of thrift in the care of animals. He will not need experience like Maggie Tulliver's with the rabbits committed to her charge, to make him estimate the importance of duties towards living animals. The sympathy and imagination of children can be easily awakened towards their dumb companions, and this should be purposely done : it is the deficiency of both capacities which leads them to the

cruelty so often said to be natural to children.¹ I have known a small child made so unhappy by realizing the grief of a mother bird robbed of her young, that she could not be pacified until the nest was restored to the tree whence it was taken. I know another child who grieved intensely for days at imagining the sufferings of her foreign bird, that had been allowed to fly out of the room into the dangers of a town garden. The mother will encourage this sympathetic imagination by making the child observe that his gentle offices are needed by the favourite dog who requires the door opened, or water given him when he cannot supply either want himself.

As part of this training, little children who live in the country should be carefully prevented from knowing anything or seeing anything of the necessary killing of animals. Like many other things in life, this must hurt the tender susceptibilities of children, and should be kept from their cognizance until other considerations can put it in its true proportion. A boy thus guarded will shrink so much from the infliction of pain, that the love of sport, in after-years, will with difficulty overcome it.

I am inclined to think that tenderness to women

¹ "Most cruelty, however," says Lecky, "springs from callousness, which is simply dulness of imagination."

and little children is most often cherished by gentleness begun to dependent animals; and though I know there are loving men and women who have little affection for them, there are few who are notably good and loving to animals who have not special kindness for dependants of higher race.

Educators have rarely disregarded the duty of calling out in children the "social motives." We all remember how Mr. Barlow and the mothers and fathers in Miss Edgeworth's stories, rather ostentatiously encouraged the relief of distress by alms-giving. The study of Political Economy has somewhat changed and widened our present ideas of philanthropy; and the children of to-day are not incited to give their pennies or coats to beggars. At the same time we generally recognize that little children can only understand charity applied to individual cases. Larger plans and reforms which affect individuals in masses, is a conception of active kindness which appeals to mature, not immature life. And I am sorry when I see the names of children in the lists of subscribers to charities. This seems to me a premature forcing of ideas, which is unhealthy, and likely to encourage, not a wise benevolence, but rather self-righteousness and vanity.

The social affections can be abundantly exercised in the homes of most children; they have

little or no property to give away, but they have as real possessions their thought, their activity, their personal trouble to use in the service of others. Children discover the value of these gifts with delight. There is almost always in the household some old, some very young, or delicate person, to whom such service is acceptable. Even the saving of trouble to others, fetching or carrying, running errands to save the ringing of the bell, is the small giving of one's self for the sake of others ; and the details of daily life should be sanctified by this idea, so that it becomes as natural to the child to live for others as to seek his own pleasure without reference to them. If we have to deal with a child in whom the selfish predominate strongly over the unselfish motives of action, we must seek in the remote corners of his nature for some regenerating spark of feeling. We may find it in reward of patient search, in the child's love for something or somebody ; it may lurk even in a love of approbation, or sensitiveness to pain, or even in restless activity. However difficult it may be to find it, we cannot but believe the germ of unselfish life exists, and that even "the poorest poor" in spirit can be brought to become "the givers out of some small blessings."

Hard trials often come to little children in their

intercourse with young companions. However much they enjoy the society of other children, there inevitably comes with it a clashing of wills, the rousing of anger, perhaps jealousy, envy, and other forms of uncharitableness. The presence of the mother or of some older companion is necessary to smooth matters at such times. Two children desire the same toy, and quarrel over the right each has to it. The mother can stop the rising indignation and sense of injustice, by a gentle appeal to the generosity or the perception of justice in the children. I have often seen, in such cases, both children melted into kindness, and rivalling each other in their willingness to give up the cherished plaything. In well-trained or finely-organized children, in whom the social motives are as strong as the selfish, the mere appeal for the claims of others is sufficient to bring out the one set of feelings and abase the other.

Sympathy is to the moral world what genius is to the world of intellect; with a like delicacy of insight, with imagination, and impersonal love, it reads the secret truth of lives and understands natures wholly different from itself. It is so fine an attribute that it seems almost a gift rather than the result of any training. But as educators we must assume that every power may be latent in

the child, and by taking for granted his possession of it, and by habitual appeal to it, we shall doubtless develop more or less of answering feeling. We often see how the living with finely organized persons, sympathetic themselves, and looking for sympathy in others, results in this effect. One of the most powerful influences, however, in the cultivation of the unselfish side of the child's nature lies in the ideals of benevolence and self-sacrifice presented to him in literature and life. He reads of the labours of Howard and Mrs. Fry in prisons, and determines, some day or other, to imitate them ; or he is moved to tears over the sufferings of noble martyrs, and thrills with desire that he may be called upon for similar, though humbler trial. And if he has been made to feel the transcendent beauty of Christ's life, he will have enshrined in his mind and spirit the noblest example of perfect love, of absolute self-sacrifice by which to shape his own faltering steps in life.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOME CARDINAL VIRTUES.—OBEDIENCE TO CONSCIENCE; DUTY.

“And through the heat of conflict, keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw.”

“*The Happy Warrior.*”

“To hate what you ought to hate, and love what you ought to love from the beginning to the end, . . . this will be rightly called education.”

Plato's Laws, Book II. (Jowett).

THE various theories concerning the origin and nature of the conscience do not greatly affect our work of practical education. Whether the instinct we call conscience is innate to human nature, or is inherited from generations who have lived in obedience to their moral sense; whether it is a swift act of the judgment dividing right from wrong, or is the result of authority or punishment,¹ it is a power in the nature of children

¹ “I have given it as my deliberate opinion, that authority or punishment is the commencement of that state of mind

which, sooner or later, faces us, and with which we are bound to deal. And we appeal to it almost involuntarily from the earliest moments when the child begins to exercise independent action. We find ourselves saying, even to an infant, "You must not do this," "You must try to be good." This appeal, half-conscious as it is, joined with the conscious moral training which is prompted by our own allegiance to a standard of right, sets up boundaries round the child's life. He gradually learns there are some things he ought to do, some that he ought not to do; lines of simple morality are marked out, all the influences of his little life lead him gradually to form a standard of right which will be ready for guidance in a time of need. While life is easy, and it is pleasant to the child to do what is required of him, this time of need will be postponed; the conscience—"the something in our bodies," as a little girl of six once put it to me, "which tells us when we are doing right or wrong,"—will remain latent. But with the growth of the child, and the increase of his powers, conflicts will arise between his inclination and the sense of right we have been quietly nurturing; some power must decide between the recognized under the various names, conscience, the moral sense, the sentiment of obligations."—*Bain on the "Emotions and Will."*

two, and assign the victory.¹ In this power we recognize a force which, if respected, will both "guide and govern life." For if we once "admit that the conscience is that in a man which points to what is above him, which declares the supremacy of a right that he did not mould, and cannot alter,"² we shall accept the decrees of this power as binding. That "right," whether accepted as representing the will of a perfect and loving Spirit, or laws which may or may not interpret this power, lays obligations on us. Various impulses of love, imagination, judgment, also suggest possible duties. The conscience reviews these with her clear vision, and decides whether they ought or ought not to be adopted as part of the obligations of our lives. And if moral excellence is the final aim of true education, our labour of training must be in a fair way of success when we arrive at any period of that training, and see the

¹ "Right conduct is felt to be something which we are not free to do or not to do, but which imposes itself on us with the force of some authority. It includes a distinct reference to a law or command outside of us, to which we owe allegiance or conformity; whether conceived as imposed and enforced by a human or by a Divine will; or regarded in a more abstract manner as something independent of all personal volitions, a law imposed by the very nature of things."—*James Sully. "Outlines of Psychology."*

² Maurice on the "Conscience."

young human being accepting in a large and fine sense the obligations naturally imposed upon him.

In notes which treat only of the *early* training of children, I can but indicate what belongs to a period beyond that I am dealing with, and show how the foundation is to be laid for that excellence of character which should crown the humble educational labours of every day. The chief training of the conscience belongs to that more distant period. With young children it must be so gentle, so almost imperceptible, that we keep latent the very power we are strengthening. I reiterate that the aim of all our early training must be to develop the child's nature in such a manner, that he loves goodness, and finds it not only most pleasant, but most easy and natural to do right ; and our success in this first duty will be shown in the postponement of the time of difficulty, of struggle and conflict. Typical childhood means this postponement of opposing desires, of imperative obligations ; a time when the stern duties of life lie in the distance, and the young human creature shares the enjoyment of other young animals, and rejoices with all nature in existence and development. It would be too much to hope that during this period there will be *no* conflict of inclination and

higher obligation ; but our object should be to defer the time of questioning and doubt, to let the child's nature remain quiescent as far as may be. It is possible to imagine that even adults in a higher plane of existence may live without conflict between the higher and lower impulses of their nature, and will always spontaneously choose the right and act it. Conflict between right and wrong has its nobility, it is necessary and beautiful, but only as a means to an end. The activity of the conscience, aroused by conflict, involves self-consciousness and self-contemplation, and although some periods of growth seem to originate in these mental states, I am inclined to believe they shut out the highest aspects of truth, which we apprehend when self is held most quiescent, and are detrimental to healthy growth in the very young.

We must rejoice, then, when the little child remains in the period of childhood as long as possible. During this time his parents, their standard of right for him, their wishes, may form his external conscience. This can only happen when the sympathy is strong between parents and children, and when the education has been wise ; but as the result of these conditions it is a beautiful aspect and effect of training. The child has absolute faith that his parents know the

right, and he accepts the decrees made for him without question. It is enough for him that "mother wishes me to do this;" or "father says I must not do that." There is no conflict, no unhealthy self-consciousness, in this sort of conscientiousness. The appeal to his parents is for the time infallible; and, guided by their obedience to duty, he learns, step by step, allegiance to moral obligations. I have known little children accept this direction so entirely, that no absence of their parents, no temptations, had power to make it falter. They have often denied themselves even harmless gratification, in their scrupulous desire to be faithful to the duty they believed was expected of them.

Under such guidance the child's appreciation of moral law becomes stronger, and he gradually begins to interpret it for himself, and apply it in practice. The relinquishment, however, of the standard and conscience of his parents for his own is so imperceptible, that we can scarcely mark it; the one fades before the other, and at some time the child shows us, often to our surprise, that he has learned his lesson, that his own sense of right is awakened, that his conscience is no longer latent, but ready to guide him. Our training has led up to this time, and it is reasonable to expect the activity of this nascent

faculty, in common with all the other powers of the child ; and yet it is essential, I think, for its healthy growth that it should be allowed to develop only in its own time and fashion. Everything like over-stimulus must be avoided. I know there are excellent parents who consistently try to stimulate the conscience of their children, and strive to render their young lives governed chiefly, if not wholly, by its rule. Perhaps most of us have witnessed scenes where childish faults have been magnified under such a system, where repeated efforts have been made to cause a child to come to, or at least to acknowledge, a sense of wrong-doing. Our hearts have ached to see the continued punishments, the confinement, the meals of bread and water, or blows, to get the confession of a lie, or repentance, as it is called, for an act of insubordination or disobedience ; while on the part of the offender we have seen pride, anger, shame, obstinacy, all rise up to meet the irrational and mistaken discipline, and we have been left doubtful whether the conscience itself has ever been really touched. These parents, in their efforts to make their children virtuous and pious, are trying to awaken in them a state of feeling belonging to their own mature age, when every word and deed is governed by the severe rule of the conscience.

We learn in Dr. Arnold's biography that "one of the chief questions on which his mind was constantly at work," in face of the difficulties of moral training in public school life, was (Serm. vol. iv. p. 19), "Can the change from childhood to manhood be hastened without prematurely exhausting the faculties of body or mind?" His biographer adds, "In the judgment of some he was disposed to answer too readily in the affirmative." The same question, framed to suit a younger age than those Rugby boys, is constantly presenting itself to other educators, and it is too frequently answered practically by attempts to antedate development. In the dilemma between the necessary exercise of the moral sense, and the danger of its over-stimulus, what course can we pursue? I am well aware of the difficulty of this part of our parental labours, and that we must depend greatly on our educational instincts and our reverence for the child's nature, for guidance in the matter. Under this direction we shall find abundant material for the exercise of the child's moral nature, whether he is living under the influence of his parents' conscience, or has himself awakened to feel his own moral power. Were the life of little children less natural, less free from affectation, we might often imagine they had been born moral philosophers,

with a mission to investigate and settle difficult questions in ethics, for their interest is prone to wander from the small examples of right and wrong in conduct immediately before them, to abstract problems. Every one who lives sympathetically with little children is aware of this tendency in them. And this freshness of interest is probably one of the appointed means of education for their moral nature. If we mentally formulate the manner in which the conscience should ultimately develop, we shall recognize that its perception of the right must be prompt and ready, while it is not morbidly susceptible; swift and unerring in its decision, resting upon judgment which is cultivated and balanced, and feelings made delicate and strong through love—love for others, love of ideas. These qualities cannot be of speedy or of early growth, although they are the fruit of gradual development. Following upon the perception of the right, “the moral feeling thus touches the springs of the will, and instantly sets it in movement. To see and feel what is wrong in ourselves or another, is to shrink from it. The thought of what is good, morally worthy and noble, is immediately attended with an impulse of desire or aspiration.”¹

¹ “*Outlines of Psychology*,” p. 556.

When the child is ready to take this second step in moral training, he becomes obedient to the moral law, yielding up, if need be, to its demands, personal inclination, comfort, pleasure. But this obedience can only be shadowed forth in the life of the little child. His conception of duty is happily proportioned to the level of all his powers, and it is only as life advances that the sense of obligation grows with the growth of the whole nature, and seeks not only to fulfil claims, but to assume fresh yokes and burdens of duty.

The highest development of the conscience is attained when this larger conception of obligation is reached, and the individual becomes a factor in the world of morality. Towards this final and ideal development, then, we have to work. And we shall best attain our end, I think, by using means as *impersonal* to the child (if I may use the expression) as possible. Fill his soul with ideals of moral life, lead his imagination to dwell on them, his love for goodness will cling to them, and he will approach them by almost insensible degrees. In the literature used by the child every day of his life, we shall find abundant material for the impersonal exercise of his judgment, the awakening of his feelings in morality. In the simple scenes of life represented in good stories for children, their indignation is moved

by wrong-doing, their enthusiasm is roused by heroism or patient virtue, far more strongly than in their elders, to whom right and wrong are not such fresh problems. The actual experience of children is naturally very limited, and one of the intense fascinations to them of suitable literature consists in the enlarged horizon it affords them. I have known children apply the lessons taken in this way from books with wonderful clear-sightedness.

A little girl of six or seven was talking to me about some mammas she had read of, who "tell their children some things that are not true, to please them." "G.'s mamma," for instance, who "told her a little bird would fly out of the curtain; but it wouldn't, you know. I don't like such mammas," she added; "they may be very comfortable and agreeable mammas, but I don't like them when they say such things!" The same little girl had been interested in a French book which had been read to her and her sisters, and said after it had been finished, "I hope you'll get us another story like it: we like it so much better than 'Sophie.' 'Sophie' is for little children: it shows them how they get punished when they don't 'bey their mammas; because, you see" (with much gesticulation), "Sophie's mamma told her she must not go into the lime: but when Sophie

went into the yard she said to herself, "What beautiful lime! I must walk through it!" and she was nearly burned." "But," I said, "do you think you don't want showing that you should obey your mother?" "Oh, no," R. said, with much quiet scorn at the question; "we *know* we must, but it's only little children like baby who want showing."

A child, after being strongly moved by the Parable of the Talents, said to me, "I have been thinking a great deal to-day about the 'talents:' I mean to try and use my talent well."

I had been reading with my own children some story about obligations, and in the course of conversation upon it afterwards, asked whether they thought grown-up people really could do what they liked. "No," said one of them, "'cos they've got duties."

In proportion to the faithfulness with which we have carried out the principles of early training laid down in these "Notes," will be the value of the impersonal exercise of the conscience. For in this proportion will be habits of "unconscious goodness" in our children, and their freedom from faults. In association with other children, also, they will learn many practical examples of moral teaching. Parents who arrange as far as they can all the influences which affect the early

life of their children, will take special care as to the character of their young companions ; but, let the care be ever so great, it often happens that the society of associates introduces quite new elements into the atmosphere of the children, suggesting fresh problems in morals. It is well when these are brought to the mother for discussion or solution : but I have known cases of undesirable influences set to work amongst children by their companions, which were not discussed with the mother because they were considered too trivial or absurd. It behoves mothers to be especially watchful of new influences upon their children.

It has been nobly said, " Without hope there is a thing called duty." It is this feeling of the supremacy, the steadfast support of duty through all the changes and troubles of life, we must inculcate in our children, and Chatham's words even to the young may sometimes prove a blessed remembrance. Times of intense depression come to all human beings, even to those full of faith and hope and strength. The light of the sun is hidden, joy is gone from the daily life, long devotion to duty, perhaps, has exhausted the very springs of patience and energy, and life is not worth living. At such times the poor human creature is like a shipwrecked sailor, who sees

[illegible]

the life of his time under their guidance. He will not be satisfied with the grudging employment of one talent; ten talents may be given him, and he will use them with loving eagerness, "as ever in (the) great Task-master's eye." His conceptions of duty will enlarge with every increase of moral and intellectual elevation; his love and power of activity will grow, and he will see with truer eyes how desired ends can be attained.

If he has a spark of the genius of the seer, the artist, the reformer, the philanthropist, in him, he will acknowledge a constantly enlarging circle of obligations, and, fulfilling faithfully the duties claimed in the intimate relations of family life, he will not be content without moving influences which affect far larger areas. And in following his ideas of duty, the opinion of others, of the so-called "world," will not disturb his steps, for in the under-current of his life will abide the knowledge that—

"Let thy ghost thee lede;
And trouthe thee shalt deliver, it is no drede."

CHAPTER IX.

REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS.

“The best way of training the young is to train yourself at the same time ; not to admonish them, but to be alway carrying out your own principles in practice.”

Plato's Laws, Book V. (Jowett).

WE very rarely, if ever, see education emancipated from the conventional ideas of reward and punishment. Moralists and experience teach that obedience to the moral and physical laws governing the universe is followed by happiness, disobedience by pain, and this teaching has so affected educational practice, that extraneous reward and punishment have come to be considered an integral part of the training of children.

Most educators would agree that children should be educated from their earliest life in such a way as to avoid the necessity of punishment, that this at least is the ideal to be striven for ; but whether from “inherited defects,” or the bad early

training of children, the majority will consider such a standard of moral education as impossible. Mr. Herbert Spencer states that "any ideal system of discipline is hopeless. Parents are not good enough." Nor are the children. "We are not," he says, "among those who believe in Lord Palmerston's dogma, that 'all children are born good.' On the whole, the opposite dogma, untenable as it is, seems to us less wide of the truth." He lays great stress on the "inheritance of defects by children in the average of cases."

The only discussion which appears allowable, is the *mode* of punishing or rewarding. The ordinary use of both is seldom anything but empirical. Educators have but vague ideas how "moral excellence" (the chief aim of all education) is to be attained. They agree that wrong-doing must be followed by pain, right by pleasure; but how the arbitrary administration of either can effect desired changes, is scarcely analyzed.

The traditional methods are those used in the hope that they will produce the expected result. And what are these?

The stern doctrines of the Old Testament have maintained a strong influence in the bringing up of the young. "Chasten thy son while there is hope; and let not thy soul spare for his crying."

"Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell." And this idea of saving the soul by the pain of the body, gratifies so naturally the imperfect impulses of most educators, that we find it believed in, and practised, not only by those who are ignorant and passionate, but by all grades of educators and for all kinds of faults.

Corporal punishment is given in anger when it must seem to the child as a consequence of personal annoyance or indignation, or it is dealt out with judicial calmness and deliberation, when it must be necessarily more impressive. A child at an elementary school cannot do his sums; his hands are caned by the teacher. Why? to make him see an intellectual problem with more acuteness? Another child disturbs his father by making a noise when quiet is necessary; he is sternly told to be quiet, but he presently forgets the command, and, busy in his own way, repeats the annoyance. The father takes it for granted he intended to be disobedient, and boxes his ear. A little girl breaks into open rebellion against her governess, or, believing that some injustice is done her, bursts into a tempest of passion. Both are met by sharp blows, or by banishment to bed, with hunger, for the remainder of the day. A boy tells a lie to his mother, or deceives her by pretending

to go to school and absenting himself; or, with confused ideas, takes, as his own, some property of his parents. A "sound flogging" is supposed to be the means of teaching him the value of truth and the rights of property. A little sister is found by another child an inconvenient competitor for toys, and she slaps her to remove her out of the way. Her mother slaps the offender by way of teaching her kindness to her sister. There does not seem much sequence between this kind of punishment and these typical offences—between disobedience and the tingling of a blow, untruth and insubordination and a larger dose of physical pain. The pain is believed to be strongly deterrent in its effects, and that is held to be sufficient. Outward conformity to established rules of order can at least generally be attained, and there is hope that some inward change of the volition follows upon the outward conformity. Much questioning as to the actual effects of physical pain on the moral nature is useless and undesirable. If the corporal punishment proves less efficacious as a deterrent than is expected, educators trusting in it are very much at a loss.

I know that one of the common arguments in favour of corporal punishment over those that appeal more directly to the moral sense of the

offenders, is that it is healthily restricted in its effects, and can leave behind it no morbid sense of wrong, no irritating self-measure. The child has done wrong, it has paid for it in physical pain, and the memory of the pain will prevent the recurrence of the offence.

I doubt whether the account is so easily settled. Physical violence is hurtful to the moral nature; it rouses as a rule opposing physical violence and fear, and too often leaves in the mind of the victim a sense of injustice or anger and hatred, instead of a true repentance. In David Copperfield's history of his relation with his step-father, we have a sad and touching account of punishment which had these effects, with the yearning for the active influence of love, which he instinctively felt would have brought opposite spiritual results. Boys, in talking of their school-life, will tell you, as another effect, that they get so callous to the indignity and shame of physical chastisement, that it produces no other result than to make them rather glory in bearing it with decent courage. They grow to prefer it to tasks, and other modes of punishment, because it is soonest over.

When education is better understood, there is little doubt that corporal punishment will be considered singularly irrational and unphilosophical,

and that educators will then seek and find intellectual and moral means for producing intellectual and moral results.

The theory which advocates those punishments which are the "true consequences" of conduct, seems a far more reasonable guide. But it is reasonable within very narrow limits. It is impossible, as I have shown elsewhere, that the theory as lately expounded by Mr. Herbert Spencer can be carried out with logical consistency. "It is the function of parents," he says, "to see that their children habitually experience the true consequences of their conduct—the natural reactions; neither warding them off, nor multiplying them, nor putting artificial consequences in place of them."

In some cases, no doubt, it is possible to let a child learn the value of judgment and foresight by allowing her to choose a wonderful "purple jar" instead of a useful pair of walking shoes; but I have never read Miss Edgeworth's story without bitter resentment against the cruelty of Rosamond's mother; and I think most readers of to-day will agree with me, that the child's love for her mother, and faith in her wisdom and goodness were dangerously jeopardized by such a lesson in the smaller and self-regarding virtues.

This theory of punishment is, however, supported by the child's sense of its justice. If the noisy child, just now cited, had been sent to play in a cold room by himself; if the untruthful boy were to be steadily disbelieved until he became convinced that it was bad policy to tell or to act lies; or the juvenile communist had had his own jacket or toys taken away from him, the children would have received some ideas, however crude, of the moral laws they had disregarded. The question to be considered is, at what cost would these ideas have been gained? We cannot safely deal with one part of the child's character in the giving of our lessons without relation to the whole, and if we act to the child as he has acted to others, will not his faith in our goodness, his reliance on our judgment, his ideas of right and wrong, receive a serious shock, which no minor advantage will counterbalance?

But if we discard both these modes of punishment, what help can we get in our task of training moral excellence in the child? I shall be told that some punishment is absolutely necessary for those children who have had no good early training.

In a very fine passage of the "Remorse," Coleridge contrasts the two ways of treating the wrong-doer, and after drawing a powerful picture

of the conventional treatment of the criminal, exclaims,—

“With other ministrations, thou, O Nature,
Healest thy wandering and distempered child,
Thou pourest on him thy soft influences,
Thy sunny hues, fair forms, and breathing sweets,
Thy melodies of woods, and winds, and waters,
Till he relent, and can no more endure
To be a jarring and a dissonant thing
Amid this general dance and minstrelsy ;
But, bursting into tears, wins back his way,
His angry spirit healed and harmonized
By the benignant touch of love and beauty.”

Here the wrong-doer is regarded as sick in spirit, and he is brought back to health,—*i.e.* goodness,—by the natural educational processes. We are not considering, as Coleridge was, the wrongdoing of adults, but I think the conduct of erring children may be thus estimated. The child's action when out of harmony with the higher moral laws is wrong (*wrung* from the right). His nature, as part of humanity, is designed to love goodness, to do right; we must treat his failing from the law of his nature as abnormal, and seek for influences, as we do in the case of bodily sickness, which will restore his soul to health. Nor can we be content with outward conformity to goodness. We must be assured that the character of the child *is* what it

seems to be, that its will is governed by the best part of its nature.

In as far as reward is the antithesis of punishment, what is true of the one is true of the other, with the difference, that it is always more safe to appeal in children to the love of pleasure than to the fear of pain. At the same time, while punishment brings in its train certain evils, extraneous reward of good action stimulates vanity, pride, all forms of self-love, and the development of the selfish, as opposed to the unselfish part of the nature. We may safely and freely allow the natural rewards to follow upon good conduct; but it shows weakness in education to supplement these by extraneous pleasures. A child learns under a good teacher with extreme industry and eagerness: he is rewarded by the pleasure he feels in the acquisition of new knowledge, in the exercise of his faculties, in the sympathy of his teacher: it is something like "gilding gold" to offer this child further stimulus in the shape of prizes. Prizes for intellectual work have been the invention of bad teachers; certainly they are not needed by those who thoroughly understand their business. The same may be said of the taking of places, and the system of "marks," when not used as a means of recording the progress of pupils.

At Dunmow, I believe, the flitch of bacon is still given to couples who claim it for their year of marriage passed without a quarrel. In French stories we read of the virtuous girl of the village being publicly rewarded. The inadequacy of such rewards pointedly shows the mistake of the principle; while the common proverb, "Virtue is its own reward," puts into shape the truth I am trying to enunciate. The exercise of the moral, no less than the intellectual, faculties, is followed by the reward of pleasure, and the satisfaction of the moral sense; and we strengthen the child's moral nature, we keep its purity intact, when we rely on this natural pleasure: we weaken it inasmuch as we encourage in its exercise mixed motives.

No doubt extraneous rewards are admissible sometimes, when we are trying to stimulate a sluggish disposition, or are endeavouring to establish a habit. I have known the offer of small pleasures act extremely well in such cases; but they were only used as leverage, and the moral conduct aimed at was of so moderate a pitch, that it was not degraded by an inadequate measure.

To the order of natural rewards and punishment belongs one of the most powerful forces in the training of children—the approval or dis-

approval of those they love. In proportion to the excellence and beauty of the relation between parents and children, in proportion to the love between them, and the reverence of the younger for the elder, will be the strength of this force. It becomes an external conscience to the child, but a conscience so tempered by mutual love as to be a healthy, almost unconscious moral sense.

Indeed, with the sort of training I have endeavoured to describe in these pages—training begun in the cradle, and continued throughout the growth of the child, with the love, and thought, and devotion to ideals in education which may be exercised by every parent, punishment is wholly unnecessary. But I am well aware that this early training is still rare, and that consequently the dealing with faults in children is almost inevitable. If the ordinary means of meeting these moral difficulties is irrational and unphilosophical, what other methods are left to educators?

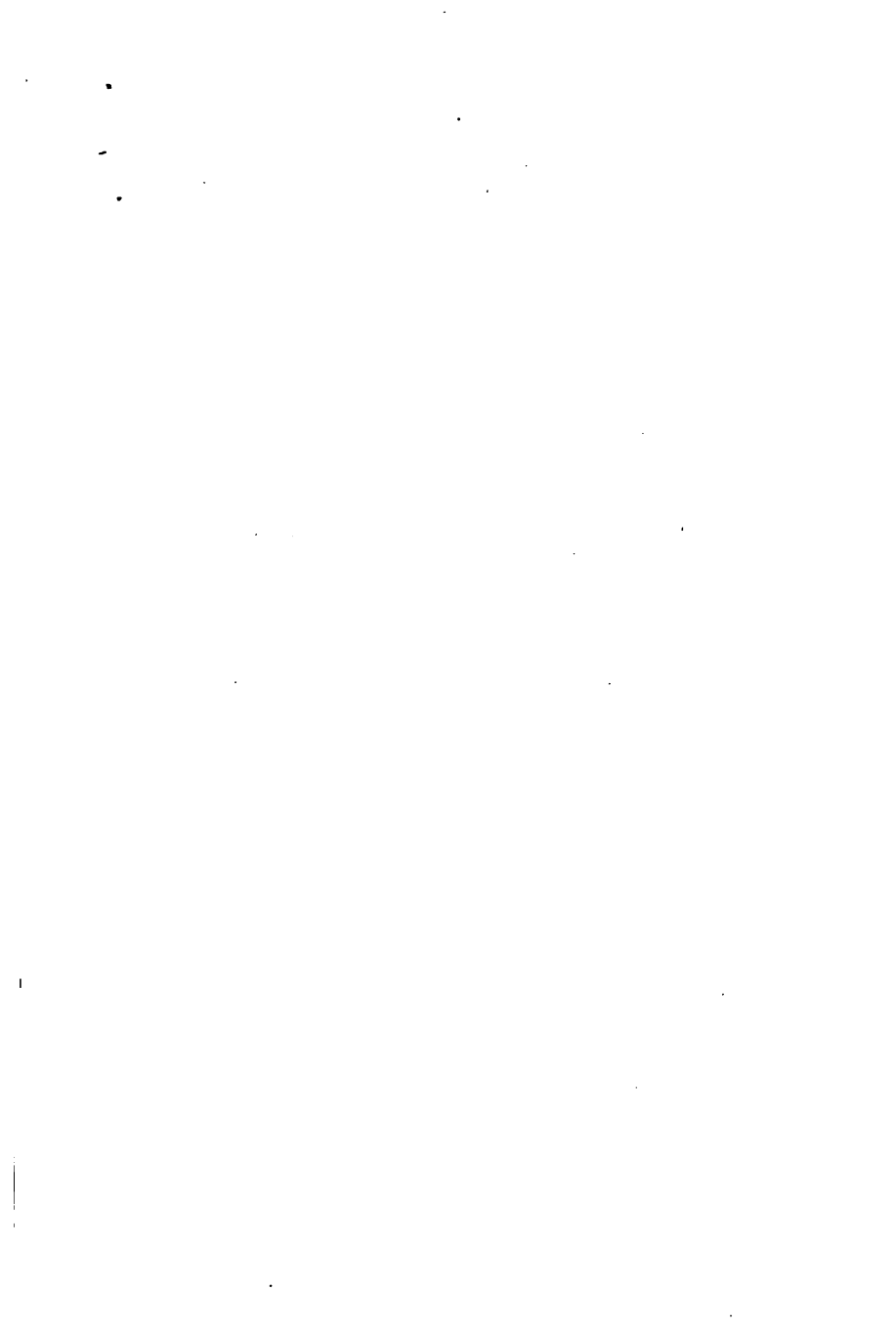
In previous chapters I have endeavoured to show how some of these faults should be treated—how untruth will fade away under the growth of courage and a truer conception of the nature of truth—how anger and selfishness must be conquered by gentleness and appeals to unselfish-

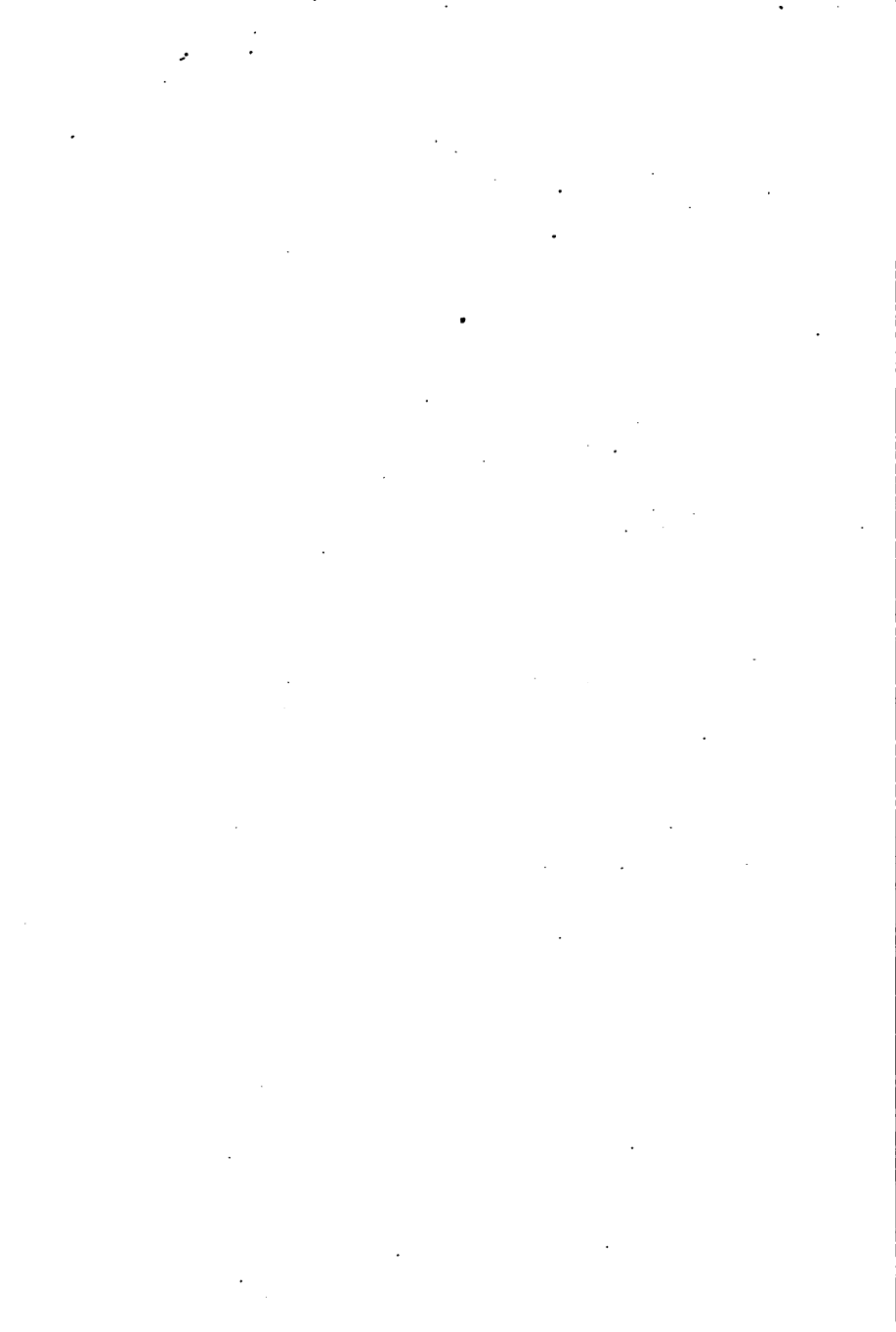
ness—how disobedience must not be risked, as obedience can never be enforced, and can only be obtained by demands upon right feeling—and so on. I am quite aware that special cases will require special educational treatment, that the variety given us to deal with by nature is so abundant, that in spite of acknowledged resemblances and differences, every child is individual in certain particulars, and requires some treatment peculiar to itself. In the family such treatment is possible. We often see in schools how individuals suffer by being part of a system which must be adapted to the needs of the majority.

As a general principle, in dealing either with “inherited defects” of children, or the results of their bad training, I urge that we should lay as little stress as possible upon faults. We must studiously avoid to rouse them: for in activity they grow and strengthen as virtues do, in rest they may grow weak and die.

We must fix our attention and our loving energy upon all the good traits in the faulty child, we must watch every tender germ of better life in him; we must love his soul, even if he is not personally dear to us—we must so love it that we rescue it from the power of evil, and give our unwearied devotion to its development in good-

ness. We must not be suspicious of evil motives, we must avoid the temptation of watching for wrong-doing—encourage the child's efforts to do right by accepting them as what we expect from him. What priests do in the heights of their office, educators must do on the lowly plains of their duty, in faith, and hope, and a humble patience.





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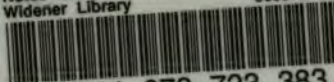
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